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Hafa Adai!

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75¢

Worker dies after falling from resort elevator shaft

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 58-year-old worker died after he reportedly fell from an elevator shaft at the Laolao Bay Golf and Resort in Kagman 3 last Sunday night.

Jose Mertola, a Filipino, suffered multiple lacerations to the head, right arm, left ribs, and right inner thigh. He had an open fracture wound to the left leg, according to Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services spokesman Derek Gersonde.

See WORKER on Page 4

Historic handkerchiefs preserve Japanese illustrations

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

Mina Neidrauer's history with the island of Saipan can be traced back to World War II, when her husband Chief Quartermaster Richard Neidrauer was deployed to the Pacific. In the many decades that followed, Mina, 93, frequented Saipan to visit her daughter, The Compassionate Friends founder Jill Derickson, who has lived on island for 18 years.

In her visit almost five years ago, Mina brought with her a piece of history: several handkerchiefs with Japanese illustrations. The handkerchiefs are on display at the CNMI Museum and she said she makes an effort to see them during every visit.

A World War II Marine who resided on Saipan after the battle concluded and whom Mina met near her residence in Portland, Oregon gave the illustrations to her. The Marine, whose daughter resides on island, became friends with a Japanese prisoner, who was an artist.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mina Neidrauer poses for a photo with one of the handkerchiefs at the CNMI Museum, which she brought to Saipan severe years ago.

Osborne defends role in GOP machinations

» Cruz calls for CNMI GOP support
» Caucus today at 6pm-8pm on Saipan, Tinian, Rota

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Osborne

Jason Osborne, executive director of the local GOP party, has defended his role in the ongoing Republican Presidential nominee race against attacks from within the local party that candidate Donald Trump plagiarized policy statements from then GOP presidential candi-

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If the Ford Focus compact could talk, it would be the Jan Brady of the Ford bunch.
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Local

‘NMTI gave us the opportunity to pursue goals’

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three graduates of the Northern Marianas Trades Institute said finishing their respective courses in the non-government learning institution gave them the chance to pursue their goals and at the same time open up opportunities for them to work in the private sector.

Pressel Camacho, Donovan Castro, and Eleanor Tudela-Tenorio recounted their respective experiences in yesterday’s proclamation signing declaring April as Technical Trades Month at NMTI’s campus in Lower Base.

Camacho will be graduating this school year at Kagman High School and has recently attended NMTI’s Culinary Arts course. She said that it was an inspirational experience learning from the likes of Ty Pauling, Inas Hocog, and Ben Babauta Jr.

JON PEREZ
Northern Marianas Trades Institute Culinary Arts student Presssel Camacho tells her story as to why she enrolled at NMTI in yesterday’s proclamation signing declaring April as the Technical Trades Month in their campus in Lower Base.

All three are from Hyatt Regency Saipan with Pauling as the food and beverage director, Hocog the chef de cuisine, and Babauta as sous chef.

“It has been a great opportunity form me and I enjoyed the classes very much. It was inspirational not only because I want to be in the culinary arts but also I was determined to get the knowledge and experience in every aspect in this particular field,” said Camacho.

“I would like to encourage everyone to keep an open mind when considering taking courses at NMTI. NMTI does not only open doors of opportunity, they also guide you every step of the way to make sure each student is given their full potential to climb, excel, and succeed in their respective trade,” she added.

Castro, who started working as a baker at Hyatt last September, told the assembled crowd to just pursue the things you want. “This is my first time to stand in front of you holding a microphone where I’m not going to sing,” he said with a laugh.

Castro is a known singer in the community. “Right now, I’m performing in a totally different stage. I enjoy working with a good team behind me and the lessons I learned at NMTI made my transition from singing to baking a lot easier.”

Tenorio, on the other hand, proved that age is not a hindrance in learning new things. “I’m very grateful that I had the opportunity to enroll at NMTI and complete my certification and training in the hotel and restaurant program.”

“NMTI has made my lifelong career passion in the hospitality industry a reality. I’m now employed at the Hyatt Regency Saipan as a guest service officer. I encourage our CNMI leaders to continue to support NMTI.”

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed the proclamation. Senate vice president Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), Sens. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan) and Justo S. Quitugua (Ind-Saipan), House Speaker Rafael S. Demapan (R-Saipan), Vice Speaker Joseph P. Deleon

See NMTI on Page 4

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CNMI visitor arrivals up 10 pct in February

Visitors arrivals to the Northern Mariana Islands jumped 10 percent in February 2016 compared to February 2015.

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota registered 47,277 visitors in February 2016, compared to 42,291 visitors received in February 2015.

Arrivals from China posted their highest-ever monthly figure at 25,719 visitor arrivals, jumping 36 percent compared to February 2015. With new flights from Tianjin, Shenyang, and Jinan operated by Dynamic Airways since January and a new flight from Hangzhou operated by Century Tours, continued rapid growth from the China market is projected for the coming year. Despite a stock market crash in China and weakening economic fundamentals in China, the continuing massive media exposure for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in the China market continues to generate high demand for travel to the NMI.

Arrivals from Korea rose 1 percent in February to 13,638 visitors. The MVA has been working with Jin Air and EASTAR JET, Korea’s major low cost carriers, on the launch of new daily services to Saipan from June and July. These new daily services will ensure a continuing increase in arrivals from Korea to the NMI. The MVA and Jin Air will conduct major online promotions together from mid-March to announce Jin Air’s new service from June 9 and to boost advance ticket sales.

Arrivals from Japan fell 31 percent to 5,853 visitors as the NMI continued to feel the effect of Delta Air Lines cutting its Narita to Saipan night flight in October, a move that dropped airlift from the Japan market to just one daily flight, or 5,771 monthly seats. February arrivals from Japan were greater than the total seat supply from the market as demand continued to outpace available air seats, prompting some Japanese to fly to the NMI via Guam. Also in February, the MVA and Delta Air Lines held the second in a series of FAM tours for top Japan travel agents, with more tours planned with Delta through June. Co-op promotions are also underway with all major Japanese travel agencies, including a series of retail campaigns, seminars, and online promotions designed to convince Delta to re-launch the Narita night flight. In addition, the MVA has been approaching all low-cost carriers to secure the launch of new flights from Japan to the NMI this year. ***(PR)***

Robert Hunter appointed to DCCA helm

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Robert Henry Hunter, executive director of the NMI Museum, has been appointed to the lead the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, taking over the post held by outgoing secretary Laura Ogumoro.

"I am confident that you will devote your time and efforts to fulfill the vital responsibilities of this office and will be an asset to the Commonwealth," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres in his appointment letter. "Your willingness to serve our people is most appreciated.

Hunter's appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate.

» Hunter says he will be DCCA employees' 'advocate'

Hunter told *Saipan Tribune* that he is honored by the appointment and excited to take on this "familiar but in some ways new role in public service."

"While I still need to bring myself up to speed on where the various divisions of the DCCA are, and what their current plans in place are where the respective missions of the divisions are concerned, my very general priority is to provide support for the divisions, and to see that the very important services they are mandated to provide are being carried out, carried out in the most effective manner possible, and that every opportunity to improve services is taken advantage of," Hunter said in email to *Saipan Tribune.*

"There are many good and talented men and women working at the DCCA," Hunter added, "and I want to make sure they are supported in their work, that they are treated like the professionals they are, that they are provided with avenues for professional development, and that they have an advocate, all of this to the benefit of not only the employees, but to the strengthening of the organization, and ultimately the provision of services."

Hunter will oversee the operation and administration of nine divisions and programs under the Department of Community & Cultural Affairs. They are the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the Childcare Licensing Program, the Office of Aging, the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, the Chamorro Carolinian Language Policy Commission, the Historic Preservation Office, the Nutrition Assistance Program, the Child Care Development Fund, and the Division of Youth Services.

"To ensure a smooth transition, Mr. Hunter will work with Madam Secretary Laura Ogumoro whose last day falls on March 21, 2016, on the operations of the department including all its divisions," Office of Governor spokesman Ivan Blanco said in statement yesterday.

Hunter

Hunter, in his 25th year of government service, currently serves as the executive director of the NMI Museum of History and Culture. Prior to joining the museum, Hunter served as the executive director of the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture, following terms as a program officer, grants writer, and public information officer. During his term with the DCCA, Hunter served on numerous occasions as the acting secretary.

Hunter also served as a program assistant and as program manager of the Public School System's Arts Program, and as an adjunct instructor for the arts at the Northern Marianas College. Hunter's service includes time as a member and vice chairman of the Consortium for Pacific Arts and Culture, a member of the CNMI Museum Board of Governors, a representative to the Pacific Arts Council, president of Arts Inc. and as a district commission member for the Boy Scouts of America. He is also into his second year as the chairperson for the NMI Humanities Council.

Hunter is also a contemporary and folk artist, having had his artwork exhibited internationally and garnering numerous awards and honors.

Missing handcuffs lead to arrest of man who allegedly burglarized house

A Juvenile Corrections officer's discovery of his missing handcuffs led to the arrest of his neighbor who allegedly burglarized and stole numerous items from his house in Kagman.

Derrick Roque Mafnas Babauta, 27, was arrested in Kagman I last week on charges of burglary and theft.

At a bail modification hearing yesterday, Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman allowed Babauta to post $750 cash and $6,750 in unsecured bond.

Babauta's father served as third party custodian.

Police Detective Andrew S. Taimanao stated in his report that last Jan. 13, a police officer responded to the house of Juvenile Corrections Officer Matthew Iguel, who reported that his house was burglarized.

Iguel reported that his 5,000 BTU Kenwood air-condition unit was stolen. The interior of the house was messy with clothes and toys were scattered around.

Iguel has been staying in Chalan Kanoa because his cousin passed away. He goes to the Kagman house everyday just to feed his pigs and turn off the outside lights in the morning.

Last Feb. 26, Iguel called DPS after he had information as to the suspect of the burglary.

Iguel told a responding police officer that he was outside his house when he noticed handcuffs on the door hanging at a house, which was used to be abandoned but now being occupied by Babauta.

Iguel checked the handcuffs and verified through its serial number that it belongs to him.

Iguel said after taking the handcuffs off from the door of Babauta's house, the door swung open. He said he saw inside the house his stolen belongings such as laptop, backpack, electric fan, and beach chair.

Iguel said he went back to his house and called the police.

That night, police officers executed a search warrant and recovered several items that were stolen from Iguel's house. Among the stolen items was the victim's work identification card. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Garapan market meat section until Nov. only

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The meat market at the Garapan Public Market can only operate at the facility until November of this year, according to Department of Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Richard Seman.

"What the Attorney General has done is basically to allow them because we already have an agreement with the [CNMI Farmers Cooperative Association] and DLNR. They can operate up to the November deadline that they have already paid for," Seman said.

Marianas Meat Harvesting Group was served two cease-and-desist orders from DLNR last October and November due to unauthorized use and lack of proper agreement with the CNMI Farmers Cooperative Association as well as the department.

They only stopped operations in January of this year after being issued a closure order. They were allowed to resume business in February per new guidelines.

"We're trying to make it legal and make sure everybody is on the right page," Seman said.

Under the new guideline, proceeds from the rent of the meat section will go directly to the Department of Public Lands instead of the farmers' association.

Marianas Meat has paid a lease of $500 a month for two years or a total of $12,000 for the use of the building.

"Every proceeds of that must go to Department of Public Lands. It is based on government land and government facility. As a policy from our government, only Public Lands can receive anything that has to do with lease with those facilities," Seman said.

Seman said DPL will give the association time to be able to give them the rental proceeds paid for by the meat market.

"[Public Lands] secretary Marianne Teregeyo is more than willing, through the Office of the Attorney General, to avail them of the opportunity to repay at the level or length of time that is doable for them," Seman said.

OSBORNE

From Page 1

date Dr. Ben Carson in a recent op-ed on U.S territories and Commonwealth issues.

Osborne, who worked as senior strategist and communications director under Carson, is now an advisor to the Trump campaign.

"Plagiarizing ideas, when you accept those ideas, isn't plagiarism, it's just flattery," Osborne told *Saipan Tribune* in a phone call last week.

Trump's March 9 op-ed, where he calls for a "Territory and Commonwealth Advisory Committee" that Carson also did in a Feb. 26 piece in support of territory concerns, has drawn the concern of a local GOP official, who has been heavily involved in party activity in recent years.

The official, who insisted on anonymity because the person was not authorized to reveal party workings, called Trump's words "copy and paste."

The fact that Osborne is the local executive director for the GOP and a Trump director is also "shaky ground," the official said.

Osborne, the GOP insider said, has "close relations" with party leaders and elected party officials. Candidate Sen. Ted Cruz, the official revealed, has also been trying to make "inroads" with the party leadership, with Gov. Eddie Calvo, a Cruz supporter, acting as a "surrogate" to Cruz and reaching out to party leaders recently.

A "huge issue" with Trump, the official said, is not just Trump's position to deport America's 12 million undocumented immigrants but also his opposition on the regulatory framework on immigration.

Trump, the official said, has used the H-1 visa class as an example to say Americans are being pushed out work by foreign labor, which, if taken away from the CNMI, whose access to labor is limited, is "very concerning to a lot of people here."

To add to that, Trump's March 9 column was "incredibly insulting as a Republican in the CNMI," the official said.

"It's upsetting," the official said, "because it's basically plagiarism, using someone else's ideas as your own."

"If Trump doesn't have a policy then that's the problem. But if he is just going to use" someone else's, "to me that means he hasn't given the territories a second thought" and has succumbed "to using [someone] else's ideas."

Osborne, in a phone call last week, explained that when the Carson campaign ended, several of the remaining campaigns reached out, except for Sen. Ted Cruz's, and "asked if I would help give them some advice for the territories."

Osborne said he shared the op-ed they had recently submitted for Carson and they put the statement into their "own words."

"Trump sees everything. If there is anything that he puts his name to, he wants to see" it," Osborne said, who also said Trump advisor for the territories, Alan Cobb, was one of the few along with himself who had been out to all the U.S. territories, including CNMI.

"Presidential campaigns get a ton of requests for things. It takes a long time to get anything done in terms of putting something out… but this is something [Trump] looked at immediately," said Osborne.

"The idea that territories are ignored, I don't think anyone can say they are not," Osborne said.

"The idea that the territories put more of their per capita, their children into the Armed Services than anyone else, that's not something new. So I don't know how many ways you can say that," he added.

"In terms of influence I having been in the process, my job as executive director is to make sure that everybody in the GOP is aware of what's going on in the presidential race and how it affects them," Osborne said in the interview last week, explaining that party officials were well aware of his work with Carson also.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres endorsed Trump for President on Saturday.

Follows is a look at similar excerpts from Carson's and Trump's op-eds:

"Year after year, you send more of your sons and daughters per capita into the U.S. Armed Services than any of the 50 states," said Carson, in his Feb. 26 column. "I stand in awe of this commitment and thank you for your service to our country. All of the territories and commonwealths, especially those in the Pacific, are vitally important to our national security, due to your positions as our first line of defense against potential encroachment by foreign powers.

"Year after year, these citizens quietly, without fanfare, send more of their sons and daughters per capita into the U.S. armed services than any of the 50 states," said Trump in his March 9 column. "All Americans should stand in awe of this commitment to the service of our nation. Geographically, the territories and commonwealths, especially those in the Pacific, are vitally important to our national security as the outer most line of defense against potential encroachment by foreign powers."

Carson's policy call to implement appoint a Territory and Commonwealth Advisory Committee or TCAC consisting of representatives from American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was also echoed in Trump's piece.

"The TCAC will be integrated into my presidential transition team, and be tasked with performing a holistic review of all federal regulations affecting the territories and commonwealths. Once sworn into office, I will appoint a special assistant to the president responsible for day-to-day interaction with the territories and commonwealths. This position would be the direct connection for the Office of Insular Affairs and the citizens of the territories and commonwealths," said Carson.

"If I am honored to earn the votes of the people of the United States, territories and commonwealths during the presidential primary process and am elected to serve, I will restore equality and fairness to all citizens, especially those that have been ignored for too long," Trump said. "As part of my administration, I will appoint a Territory and Commonwealth Advisory Committee, or TCAC, consisting of representatives from American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The TCAC will be integrated into my presidential transition team, and be tasked with performing a holistic review of all federal regulations affecting the territories and commonwealths."

GOP caucus today

Meantime, ahead of the GOP caucus today, the Cruz campaign has released the statement to drum up local support:

"In the Pacific Century, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands occupies a vital place. Your islands are of greater significance than ever as the world pivots to the Pacific and the United States confronts major security and economic challenges in Asia, including missile defense, trade, and freedom of the seas. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is of great strategic importance to the United States, and under a Cruz administration, we will recognize and honor that fact. And my administration will work closely with the CNMI government on issues that directly affect your future.

"I will also take on the issues that not only matter to Americans in the 50 states, but that matter to you as well—uncontrolled immigration, overregulation, and in particular the jobless economic stagnation, and national decline that Obama/Clinton policies have imposed on the country. I have put forward specific plans to restore jobs and growth, to rip up Obamacare, and end skyrocketing health care premiums while providing greater choice and abundance of care to all Americans, including our veterans, who have been greatly shortchanged in their health care. Most recently, I have put forward a plan to rebuild America's military, which features a major expansion in active duty military personnel, in all four Services—Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines.

"I am committed to relieving all Americans, including the people of the Northern Marianas, from excessive burdens imposed by federal agencies, including unfunded mandates, which strangle businesses and job creation.

"Even since the people of Texas elected me, my record has been marked by one overriding feature: I have done what I said I would do. These plans will not be forgotten once the campaign is over and government begins. I ask for your vote in the Presidential Caucus and look forward to working with you to ensure not only the prosperity of your islands but of our common United States," Cruz said.

The CNMI GOP caucus starts at 6pm and ends at 8 pm at the Minachom Atdao Pavilion on Saipan, the Rita Manglona Residence, San Jose Village on Tinian, and the Rota Roundhouse on Rota.

NMTI

From Page 2

Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), Reps. B.J. Attao (Ind-Saipan), Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan), Felicidad T. Ogumoro (R-Saipan), Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), Antonio P. Sablan (Ind-Saipan), Vinnie E. Sablan (Ind-Saipan), Ray A. Tebuteb (Ind-Saipan), Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), and Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan), Cabinet secretaries James Ada (Public Works), Edith Deleon Guerrero (Labor), Marianne Teregeyo (Public Lands), Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang, and Saipan and Northern Islands Council chair Antonia Tudela and vice chair Alicia Igitol were also present during the signing.

HISTORIC

From Page 1

"The artist wanted to do some drawings, but had no paper to draw on. Jack [the Marine] had several linen hankies and he gave them to the prisoner who made beautiful pictures on them and gave them to Jack for his kindness," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

She added, "I asked to see the hankies and what Jack was going to do with them. He said that maybe his children would want them—it turned out they didn't so I brought them to Saipan so they could be displayed in the CNMI Museum where they are now, framed and hanging on the wall."

Mina explained how impressed she was when she first viewed the drawings.

"You could tell that he was a talented artist. I have no idea how he did them, but come to see them and you will see the beauty!"

She urges residents and visitors to visit the museum to view the illustrations for themselves.

"There is much history there and many, many interesting things displayed there from recent times and from long, long ago. It is fascinating to walk through the galleries and see what is there," she added.

Mina is back home in Portland, Oregon, where she enjoys playing bridge with her many friends. She explained that she has made many new friends on island and enjoys her visit every year to escape the cold stateside weather.

WORKER

From Page 1

Mertola was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center emergency room, where Dr. Florence Schenker pronounced him dead at 9:06pm.

Gersonde said Mertola was found at the bottom of the elevator shaft and that employees stated that prior to that he was seen working in an area in the elevator that was 20 to 30 feet in height.

Department of Public Safety acting spokesman Jason Tarkong said yesterday that preliminary investigation showed that the cause of death was accidental.

Tarkong said the investigation is ongoing and that he has yet to receive copy of the police reports.

Gersonde said that, on Sunday at 7:09pm DFEMS received a call from DPS 911 dispatch about a possible missing person last seen working in the elevator shaft at Laolao Bay Golf and Resort.

Medics and firefighters from Garapan, Kagman, and Susupe fire Stations responded to the scene.

Gersonde said while DFEMS personnel were on their way to the scene, 911 dispatchers notified them that the victim was found at the bottom of the elevator shaft and was unresponsive, motionless, and not breathing.

Upon arrival, DFEMS personnel checked the victim for a pulse and lung sounds.

Gersonde said after DPS crime scene technicians processed the scene, medics transported the victim to CHC.

Gersonde said information regarding the cause or investigation should be referred to DPS.

It's not clear yet whether Mertola was a maintenance worker at the resort.

A source said Mertola had in his hand a box cutter.

DPS is expected to release more details about the incident today, Tuesday.

Saipan Tribune tried to reach the hotel management yesterday, but no one was available to comment.

More time to play golf for Kikuchi

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Japanese Consul to the CNMI Hitoshi Kikuchi loves to play golf and is looking forward to have more time to play the sport when he returns to Japan tomorrow. Kikuchi will be retiring and will go back to Tokyo.

"Maybe, I'll play golf more often since I'm already retired. I love playing golf. I don't know and I have no idea yet on what other things I would do when I return to Japan," said Kikuchi in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* during his farewell dinner at the Grandvrio Resort's Fiesta Hall.

Kikuchi was the Japanese consul to the CNMI for more than two years arriving on Saipan in December 2013. His replacement is set to arrive next month. "I trust that you will also show the same support and trust that you have given me to the one who will replace me."

He remained humble and said that he felt that he could have done more being Japan's official representative to the CNMI.

"There are times that I feel that I didn't succeed with this job. Still, it was truly an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I have met and have been acquainted with so many people here."

Kikuchi said that while the arrival of Japanese tourists have declined in years, the relationship and partnership between the CNMI and Japan never changed.

"I don't think of the negative effect of Japanese tourists here on Saipan. Despite the decline of Japanese tourists, the size of Japanese nationals living and working here on Saipan is increasing."

Kikuchi added that the partnership between the CNMI and Japan will further strengthen between students who will be involved in various cultural exchange programs.

"The relationship between Japan and the CNMI remains the same. It will not change since it dates back more than 100 years. We're going to develop stronger ties through various exchange programs for many years to come."

Japanese nationals also regularly visit the CNMI where they join various sports events like the recently concluded Tagaman and XTERRA Saipan Championship triathlon races or holding memorial and peace ceremonies commemorating the end of World War II.

Kikuchi also remembered the earthquake and tsunami that hit Fukushima City on March 11, 2011. "[Friday] happens to be the commemoration of the tsunami and earthquake in Japan where many people died. After five years, many are still missing."

He also invited CNMI residents to also consider visiting Japan and not only treat it as a transit point going to the U.S. mainland. "The best season to visit Japan is during the spring where the Cherry blossoms are blooming. I encourage everyone to visit Japan."

JON PEREZ

Outgoing Japanese Consul to the CNMI Hitoshi Kikuchi, right, talks to Reps. Edwin K. Propst, left, and Edmund S. Villagomez in last Thursday's farewell dinner for the Japan representative.

PHA annual plan for FY 2017 open for comments

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. has opened the public comment period for their annual plan on public housing.

According to NMHC corporate director Jesse Palacios, they have completed the draft of the Public Housing Authority Annual Plan for fiscal year 2017.

The comment period for the plan started last Friday and will last until April 25.

As NMHC is designated as the authority on Public Housing which is authorized to administer the Housing Choice Voucher Program in the CNMI, they are required by the federal government to prepare the annual plan.

The PHA Plan, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is a comprehensive guide to PHA policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals.

The plan is composed of two parts, which are the five-year plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every fifth PHA fiscal year; and the annual plan, which is submitted to HUD every year by non-qualified agencies.

NMHC will also conduct a public hearing regarding the PHA plan during the last day of the comment period at their Garapan office's conference room.

The housing corporation said the draft of the PHA annual plan for FY 2017 is available for viewing at their main office and at their website, www.nmhc.gov.mp. ***(Fraulein Villanueva-Dizon)***

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Melvin Ada found liable to pay $699,484 in restitution

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona has found Melvin G. Ada liable to immediately pay restitution in the total amount of $699,484.34 to victims Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and Midwest Medical Supply Co. LLC.

Ada is a former CHCC employee who was slapped with 12.7 years in prison for stealing over $1.7 million from CHCC that was intended for Midwest Medical Supply, a Missouri-based company that had supplied dialysis and consumables and equipment to the hospital.

At a restitution hearing on Friday, Manglona ordered Ada to pay $566,919.26 to CHCC and $132,565.08 to Midwest Medical Supply.

»Missouri-based company found a victim in case

Manglona said if the defendant is unable to pay the amount immediately and in its entirety, then he shall pay the amount during the period of supervision on an installment basis according to the collection policy of the U.S. Probation Office.

After the hearing, Ada was remanded into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Midwest Medical Supply, through counsel Richard W. Pierce, has submitted a claim for restitution in the amount of $132,565.08 due to non-payment by CHCC on 13 invoices MMS issued between 2009 and 2011 as a result of Ada's conduct.

The U.S. government, through assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe, opposed awarding restitution to MMS.

In a memorandum, Backe said the U.S. government has serious concern as to whether MMS meets the definition of a "victim."

Backe said until some questions are answered, it is the good-faith position of the U.S. government that MMS' accounting system is simply too unreliable to support an award in this case.

Indeed, Backe said, as the evidence presently stands, there actually exists a possibility that MMS owes money to CHCC and not the other way around.

At the hearing, Ada, through counsel Colin Thompson, did not object to the restitution in the amount of $566,919.26 payable to CHCC.

Backe informed the court that he has been in communication with Medicare and that the U.S. government will not be seeking any restitution for Medicare.

According to the minutes of the hearing, U.S. Probation Officer Margarita Wonenberg presented supporting documents regarding MMS's claims.

Pierce called MMS vice president of Finance John Kastberg to testify via video teleconference.

After reviewing all the evidence and hearing all arguments from counsels, Manglona stated that she agreed with MMS counsel Pierce.

Manglona found MMS to be a victim in this case and awarded the company $132,565.08 in restitution.

Ada was previously assigned as a medical supply specialist at CHC. His wife, Leyda, used to be a sales representative for MMS. Leyda was convicted of perjury. Her sentencing set for yesterday was continued to next month.

Micronesian leaders support use of PRATC

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A resolution for sister islands in Micronesia to support the use of the Pacific Region ARFF Training Center on Saipan was signed and memorandum of agreements are expected to follow suit.

According to Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director MaryAnn Lizama, the leaders of Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, Guam, and the CNMI all supported the PRATC resolution which aims to establish a partnership with the islands.

"It basically gives that guarantee that any other training that deals with firefighting, they come here. That will basically solidify the partnership," Lizama said, who presented the resolution as well as PRATC's efforts and plans at the 21st Micronesian Chief Executive Summit last month.

The resolution states that the participants at the summit, including Palau President Tommy Remengesau, FSM President Peter Christian, RMI President Dr. Hilda Heine, together with governors and/or lieutenant governors of CNMI, Guam, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, "fully support and recommend participation in the firefighter training program as delineated the PRATC Memorandum of Agreement.

Copies of the resolution and MOA will be forwarded to fire departments and corresponding agencies, the resolution added.

Lizama said the MOA will engage the Micronesian airport sponsors in committing to and investigating in, not only the ARFF personnel, but other airport personnel as well.

In the presentation, Lizama discussed CPA's plans to expand the curriculum not only covering the airport firefighters but also airport police, tenant employees, ground handlers, and fuelers that its board has supported through their own resolution back in June 2014.

"I also discussed that there will be a subsequent memorandum of agreement that will bring in the partnership further, and spread it further out to the other important employees and a subsequent resolution so that we have that commitment that in any and all training, this will be the hub, this will be the training hub." Lizama said.

Currently, PRACT has courses on Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting, Basic Firefighting and Rescue, and Hazardous Material, and Weapons of Mass Destruction.

CPA opened PRATC in 2005 to provide "unparalleled" emergency response and fire prevention. Its ARFF Academy has a graduate data totaling to 213 from the first to the eighth ARFF Academy cycles from 2005 to 2016 with the CNMI having the largest number of 50, followed by Palau with 25, and Yap with 17 graduates.

Lawsuit over alleged removal from hospital of businessman with Alzheimer's dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A mother and son, who filed a lawsuit over the alleged removal from a hospital in South Korea of a 73-year-old businessman diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, have voluntarily dismissed the case.

Koom Nye Kim and her son, Sang Hun Lee, through counsel David G. Banes, filed on Friday in the Superior Court a notice of voluntary dismissal without prejudice against the 73-year-old Byung Deuk Lee and Ji Sook Lee.

Dismissal without prejudice means the plaintiffs may refile the case in the future.

Banes did not specifically indicate the reason behind the dismissal.

San Hun Lee is the son of Kim and Byung Deuk Lee.

Ji Sook Lee is the half-sister of San Hun Lee and Young Shin Lee. She is daughter of Byung Deuk Lee.

The mother and son are suing Ji Sook Lee, who allegedly removed Byung Deuk Lee from a hospital in South Korea, where he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, kept him away from his family, then traveled to Saipan to control all of his businesses and property.

Banes noted at a hearing last month that three medical institutions—two in Korea and one on Saipan—determined that Byung Deuk Lee is not competent because he has Alzheimer's and other cognitive and memory impairments.

Attorney Robert T. Torres, counsel for Byung Deuk Lee, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that the decision by plaintiffs and purported petitioners for his client's guardianship to dismiss their action, whether strategic or sincere, speaks for itself.

Torres said Byung Deuk Lee has spoken for himself, is fine, and is control of his business interests and his mental faculties.

"Now he will attend to enjoying his life and dealing with whatever course may follow with his family members given their ill-treatment of him," Torres said.

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP16-BECQ-067
Submission: April 12, 2016 Time: 10:00 A.M.

"TO PROVIDE TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION FOR THE BECQ ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM"

The Scope of Work for this project will be available on or after **March 08, 2016** at the BECQ office located at the Gualo Rai Center Building, on Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan or electronically by e-mail request to **reinacamacho@becq.gov.mp** during regular working hours.

A pre-proposal meeting is scheduled for **March 28, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.** local time, in the 2nd Floor BECQ conference room.

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted by facsimile to **Ms. Reina Camacho**, (670) 664-8540 or by email at **reinacamacho@becq.gov.mp** no later than the **close of business, April 01, 2016.** Responses to questions shall be shared with all prospective proposers.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

/s/ **FRANK M. RABAULIMAN**
Administrator of BECQ

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP16-BECQ/DCRM-070

E-BID IS AUTHORIZED ON THIS RFP AND MUST BE SENT TO procurement@pticom.com NO LATER THAN 10:00 A.M., CHAMORRO STANDARD TIME, UTC +10 HOURS BY APRIL 06, 2016

"GARAPAN FIELD SURVEILLANCE PROJECT FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER **MARCH 08, 2016** AT THE BECQ OFFICE LOCATED AT THE GUALO RAI CENTER BUILDING, ON CHALAN PALE ARNOLD ROAD, SAIPAN OR ELECTRONICALLY BY E-MAIL REQUEST TO **k.graziano.becq@gmail.com** DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MAY BE SUBMITTED BY FACSIMILE TO MS. KATIE GRAZIANO, (670) 664-8531 OR BY EMAIL AT k.graziano.becq@gmail.com NO LATER THAN THE **CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 29, 2016.** RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SHALL BE SHARED WILL ALL PROSPECTIVE PROPOSERS.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A PROPOSAL IF IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
ADMINISTRATOR OF BECQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP16-DCCA/NAP-079

SUBMISSION: JUNE 13, 2016 **TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

"TO PROVIDE CNMI NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM'S ELIGIBILITY SYSTEM FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, CNMI NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR AFTER **MARCH 15, 2016** AT THE **N.A.P. OFFICE**, LOCATED AT THE JTV BUILDING IN AS LITO, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING AND ARE DEUE NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, **APRIL 28, 2016** AND MUS BE DIRECTED TO MR. WALTER MACARANAS, NAP ADMINISTRATOR BY FAX TO (670) 664-2580 OR E-MAIL TO **dccanap@pticom.com.**

IT IS A MANDATORY THAT ALL INTERESTED PARTIES REGISTER WITH THE CNMI DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY VIA E-MAIL TO procurement@pticom.com BY **MAY 13, 2016.**

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A PROPOSAL IF IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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INVITATION FOR BID

AMENDMENT #01 - NMHC IFB 2016-007
PURCHASE OF WILD LAND FIRE TRUCK
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (DFEMS) - TINIAN

This Ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD Funds.

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors through its Chairman of the Board is soliciting competitive sealed bids from interested vendors for the purchase of Wild Land Fire Truck for the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) - Tinian.

Copies of the Scope of Work may be obtained at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular business hours, Monday thru Friday except CNMI Holidays beginning **Friday, February 19, 2016.**

Sealed bids must be marked "NMHC IFB 2016-007". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (former EMO Office), Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, no later than **10:30 a.m., local time, Thursday, March 31, 2016.**

Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:30 a.m. local time Thursday, March 31, 2016, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via email to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than Thursday, March 31, 2016, **AND** must be received no later than Monday, April 11, 2016. **Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.**

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement of Supply, Capitol Hill (former EMO), Saipan, at 10:00 a.m., local time Tuesday, April 12, 2016. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 11:00 a.m. local time on **Thursday, March 31, 2016.**

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

NMHC further notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contracts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and women-owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE) are afforded equal opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, gender, age, disability or national origin.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any defects in the said bids, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All bids will become the property of the Government.

For more information, contact Ms. Jocelyn C. Seman, Procurement Officer, or Mr. Jacob J. Muna, Planner/Environmental Officer at (670) 234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **Jesse S. Palacios**
Corporate Director

/s/ **Herman S. Sablan**
Director, Procurement & Supply

MYPros Membership Meet (M3) on March 16

The Marianas Young Professionals (MYPros), dedicated to providing diverse networking opportunities to young professionals throughout the CNMI, is excited to announce its next MYPros Membership Meet (M3) on Wednesday, March 16, from 6pm to 7:30pm at the Pacific Island Club's Seaside grill. M3s bring influential professionals from the CNMI to speak to the group about their background and leadership experiences.

On Wednesday, Saipan Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year, Alex Youn, will share on his professional success and upcoming project, "The Small Business Incubator." Mixed Martial Arts role model-turned-businessman, Frank "The Crank" Camacho, will discuss what's next for CRANK INDUSTRIES along with his life beyond the MMA world.

"We're really excited to dig into the second year for the MYPros," said MYPros president Bo Palacios. "We're expanding our reach into the community by setting up committees focused on the environment, public and private relations, and professional development, among others."

"I'm amazed to have such great people step up to chair our committees. As young professionals, we're all very busy, so it's important to have a wide support network," said MYPros vice president Nola Hix.

Marianas Young Professionals Board of Directors, from left, Rep. Angel Demapan, Matthew Deleon Guerrero, Nicolette Villagomez, Jacqueline Che, Nola Hix, Kaitlyn Neises-Mocanu, and Bo Palacios pose for a group photo after one of their recent events.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Registration for the M3 begins at 5pm and the $15 admission includes a free drink and food.

MYPros develops the region's future leaders by providing ambitious young professionals with the opportunity to build relationships, serve the community, and engage with political, civic, and business leaders. This dynamic group of 75+ members is open to anyone between the ages of 21 and 40, and membership is rolling—you can join the program year round. Membership is $30 and lasts 12 months.

Don't meet the age requirements to be a MYPro? NO PROBLEM! Register to become a MYPros Volunteer at www.mypros.org and get added email updates. Learn more at www.mypros.org or like us on facebook.com/mypros670. ***(PR)***

NAP holds Professional Development Training

As part of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs-Nutrition Assistance Program's efforts to improve customer service relations to the public, NAP held its 3rd Annual Professional Development Training for NAP staff last March 11 at the Aqua Resort Club.

The all-day training focused on three main critical topics: Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Sexual Harassment; Excellent Customer Service; and Team Building. The EEO session covered the requirements of EEO local and federal rules and the governing laws of non-discrimination of any individual or groups on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, and genetic information.

The EEO helped NAP staff better understand the different forms of discrimination and ways to prevent such from occurring in the workplace. The excellent customer service re-enforces the demeanor of exhibiting positive attitude and exercising systematic and comprehensive delivery of information and service to the public. The team building session helped NAP staff better understand the benefits of teamwork, respect, and effective communication among managers, supervisors, and staff. The annual trainings are meant to help build better communication and develop skills among employees in order to provide quality service to the public.

The training was facilitated by Frank L. Gibson, SPHR, GPHR, SHRM-SCP. Gibson holds two certifications from the Human Resources Certification Institute as Senior Professional and Global Professional in Human Resources; and Senior Certified Professional from the Society for Human Resources Management.

The NAP staff was happy and appreciate the trainings, which will help them apply what they learned to their work. ***(PR)***

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SHRM wants voice to be heard on workforce issues

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The new president for the Society for Human Resource Management-NMI Chapter wants their organization to take on a more active role in participating on issues involving the workforce in the CNMI.

According to SHRM president Pina Deleon Guerrero, they would like to be more active in the community and make their own stand on various issues, including the Commonwealth-only workers and its imminent end in 2019, which will greatly impact the CNMI labor force.

"I would hope to that we as a group will have the voice in that. We would like to be heard," Deleon Guerrero said.

"We kind of taken a passive role. We were always more on the training side but I think it's due [this] time, I think the organization is already ripe enough to be actively involved in what happens to future workforce because that involves us," she added.

They also hope to look into bills and other policies affecting the workplace.

"Sometimes laws are passed and we didn't even comment on it, we didn't even review it and it does affect the workplace," Deleon Guerrero said.

"Sometimes we feel that we are so everyday activity that we don't take the time to educate ourselves. There are always changes, there are laws that are changing, the dynamics is changing. All those things we'd like to touch base this year," she added.

Deleon Guerrero added that they would like to provide more than their regular lunch topics which are set monthly.

"We'd like to do a little bit more on like workshop so that we can develop more skills in people who are in HR," Deleon Guerrero said.

This is Deleon Guerrero's second time to serve as SHRM's president. She was among the founders of SHRM on island, being a part of it since 1995.

First Hawaiian Bank donates to MTEC

The Marianas Tourism Education Council commenced its annual presentations to elementary schools this week armed with additional giveaways donated by First Hawaiian Bank.

The donation of school supplies was made by Vickie N. Izuka, FHB assistant vice president and Business Banking officer, and Victoria Concepcion, FHB assistant vice president and branch manager, to the MTEC Board of Directors on March 9, 2016, at the FHB Oleai Branch.

The donation of 300 pencils, erasers, and rulers will be distributed by MTEC through its student outreach and other activities.

"On behalf of the MTEC Board of Directors, we are grateful to the First Hawaiian Bank for donating these school supplies to our Education Outreach Program," said MTEC chair Vicky Benavente. "Tourism is everybody's business, and FHB has stepped up to help spread the word to the youth in our community."

This week MTEC and Marianas Visitors Authority kicked off their annual round of presentations to elementary schools at San Vicente Elementary (March 7), Garapan Elementary (March 9), and Koblerville Elementary, and Kagman Elementary (March 10).

The presentation included an overview of the how the tourism industry helps the community, why visitors choose to visit the Northern Marianas, the role of the MVA, and what students can do to support tourism. Project manager Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong of Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance at Garapan Elementary School also joined the presentation at Garapan Elementary School. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

First Hawaiian Bank donated school supplies to Marianas Tourism Education Council (MTEC) on March 9, 2016, at the FHB Oleai Branch in support of MTEC's school presentations on the importance of tourism. Seated, left to right, are Vickie N. Izuka, FHB assistant vice president and Business Banking officer; Victoria Concepcion, FHB assistant vice president and branch manager; and MTEC chair Vicky Benavente. Standing, left to right, are MTEC Board treasurer Shamika Ratwatte of Ernst & Young, MTEC secretary Martin Duenas of Marianas Visitors Authority, MTEC director Larry Lee, and MTEC director Chris Concepcion of Delta Air Lines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Visitors Authority Community Programs specialist Ryan Calvo shares with students the role and activities of the MVA during the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council (MTEC) on March 10, 2016, at Koblerville Elementary.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students at Kagman Elementary School win prizes for correctly answering questions about tourism during the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council (MTEC) on March 10, 2016. Also pictured is MTEC chair Vicky Benavente.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students at Koblerville Elementary School win prizes for correctly answering questions about tourism during the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council (MTEC) on March 10, 2016. Also pictured are Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects Specialist Ryan Calvo, MVA Community Projects Assistant Jenn Babauta, and MTEC chair Vicky Benavente.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students at Garapan Elementary School win prizes for correctly answering questions about tourism during the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council (MTEC) on March 9, 2016.

Hands on community service by Lions Club

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

JON PEREZ

Lions Clubs region chair Ladyvir Canape, seated left, joins the nurses and staff of CHCC and its Family Care Clinic, and members of the Northern Marianas College Nursing Club in Sunday's Health Fair.

The Lions Clubs International does not only give out financial aid or assistance to communities but also offer a hands-on approach in every aspect of service, according to visiting district governor Daniel Yang.

Yang, the District 204-Region II governor was on Saipan to join the local Lions clubs—the Saipan Filipino-American Lions Club, Saipan Marianas Lions Club, Saipan Unity Lions Club, Tinian Marianas Lions Club, and the Rota Marianas Lions Club—in Sunday's annual Health Fair held at Mt. Carmel Cathedral's Joeten Dai-Dai Social Hall in Chalan Kanoa.

"Lions Clubs International participates in every community project. Whether it involves the youth, the elderly or the disabled; helping fight hunger and poverty; and in the environment like what the local clubs here do in repairing bus stops," said Yang.

Several bus stops that were either damaged or are already dilapidated on Saipan have been repaired and repainted by the local Lions clubs.

"The Lions clubs are involved everywhere. We have a hands-on approach in helping our communities by not only providing monetary support," said Yang, who added that the Health Fair is one of the Lions Club's signature projects.

Lions Clubs region chair Ladyvir Canape said that the Health Fair and similar events organized by other government and private organizations help people to be more aware of their physical condition.

"Events like this teach us to be more careful of what we eat and to take care of our health. I am very happy with the turnout, which means a lot of people want to become more aware of their health," Canape said.

Blood pressure test, sugar/glucose test, vision screening, and eye pressure test, and flu shots are some of the free services offered in the Health Fair that began at 8am and ended at 12noon. Medical staff of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. also held hold information campaigns on diabetes, cancer, and general health awareness.

They also provided eye check up and gave out free reading glasses, which are the trademark projects of the Lions clubs.

"I'm thankful and very happy to all the volunteers—Lions members and non-members—who helped. They've been working even before we started at 8am and are still cheerful in providing service to all who attended the Health Fair," said Canape.

Canape added that the new thing they added in the Health Fair is records of all who availed of the free services will be kept so they could compare it when they again hold the annual event. "We will start with the comparative results for next year. To know if the patient's condition is improving or if there are any changes."

The Northern Marianas College Nursing Club, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. nurses, CHCC's immunization program, PHI Pharmacy, Paradise Dental Clinic, the Commonwealth Cancer Association, and the Guam Marianas Lions Club are the service providers.

TSL Foundation, IT&E, Barny's Pizza, NM Bartender's Association, Jet Holdings, Kautz Glass, McDonald's, National Office Supply, Sun Palace Hotel, Trader's Insurance, Coca-Cola, Shirley Wilson Catering Services, D' Elegance Café, Saipan Ice & Water Co., Wushin LP Gas, McDonald's, Gold Ribbon Snack Bar & Bakeshop, JFR Corp., D&Q Saipan, Marpac, and KFC/Taco Bell are the sponsors of the event.

NOTICE OF SALE
CDA FORECLOSED PROPERTIES

The Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA) hereby gives notice that it is seeking interested buyers, bids and proposals for the fee simple purchase or the leasing of its foreclosed properties. The specific foreclosed properties available for sale or lease are:

LOT NO.	LOCATION		SIZE (sqm)	DESCRIPTION	ASKING PRICE
ROTA PROPERTIES **Wednesday, March 16, 2016** **NMC Campus after the Stakeholders' Meeting**					
1	230 R 01	Tatgua	9,384.5	Vacant	75,000
2	167 R 03	Isang	30,000	Vacant	60,000
SAIPAN PROPERTIES **Friday, March 18, 2016** **2:00pm CDA Conference Room**					
1	Tr 22805-1-4	As Teo	2,241	Vacant	35,000
2	1674-NEW-5-2	Kannat Tabla	1,401	Vacant	25,000
3	012 G 87	Kagman	1,010	Vacant	15,000
4	012 G 88	Kagman	1,130	Vacant	15,000
5	012 G 89	Kagman	902	Vacant	12,000
6	278-15	i-Denni	4,928	Vacant	65,000

Fee Simple Purchase and Auctions (A) & Leasehold or Ground Lease with Option to Purchase (B)

1. Interested bidders and buyers are cautioned to inspect the title and property. The interests of CDA in the property are being sold **"AS IS"** and without warranty. Failure to inspect the real property or improvements or any related documents will not constitute a ground for any claim, adjustment or rescission by any buyer or lessee.
2. CDA reserves the following rights:
   a. To withdraw any or all of the listed properties before sale or lease or before a bid for such property is accepted, without incurring any liability whatsoever thereby; and
   b. To reject any and all bids or proposals.

Interested persons may contact Nanette Estrada at 532-9408 (ROTA) and Christy Kintol at 234-6245 ext. 310 (SAIPAN) for more information or to inspect properties, appraisals and or photos.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel.: (670) 664-2375 • Fax: (670) 664-2408

INVITATION TO BID
ITB16-GOV/CIP-078

Supply and Installation of an Underground Storage Tank (UST) Monitoring System
For the Guma Hustisia (Judiciary) Building
Saipan, CNMI

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Governor Victor B. Hocog are soliciting sealed bids for the Supply and Installation of an Underground Storage Tank (UST) Monitoring for the Guma Hustisia (Judiciary) Bldg., Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The work will involve the supply, installation, testing and commissioning of a new, compliant, and fully functional UST monitoring system, including securing and compliance with necessary permits, inspections, and approvals from the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ).

The project package will be available **Wednesday, March 16, 2016** at the Governor's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Administrator's Office, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill. A $100.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001. Public Law 15-95 Local Preference Act, as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Monday, March 28, 2016**, 2:00PM ChST at the Atrium Conference Room, ground floor of the Guma Husticia (Judiciary) Building, Susupe, Saipan. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 PM ChST **Friday, April 1, 2016** to Mr. Carl Castro, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or faxed to (670) 664-2408. All responses to questions will be copied to other prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked "**Supply and Installation of an Underground Storage Tank (UST) Monitoring for the Guma Hstisia (Judiciary) Bldg.**". For bidders within the CNMI, one (1) original and two (2) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 9:00 AM ChST Friday, April 8, 2016. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 AM ChST Friday, April 8, 2016, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, one (1) original and two (2) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **April 8, 2016** and must be received no later than 10:00 A.M. **Friday, April 15, 2016** ChST. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 AM ChST April 15, 2016. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 AM ChST April 8, 2016.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:
1) Cash
2) US Government Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **Forty-Five (45) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be greater of (i) Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00) per day, or (ii) two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by Forty-Five (45) calendar days, the contract time and will be accessed as delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ Ralph DLG. Torres, Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Procurement and Supply, DOF

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Turkey's tyrant: He steamrolls the media, because he can

The president of Turkey is getting his Putin on.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan looks less like the custodian of democracy for a crucial American ally hoping to join Europe and more like a nasty, crafty autocrat. More like … Vladimir Putin.

Who needs this guy? Well, the West does. And Erdogan knows it. Turkey, a NATO member, is key to the fight against Islamic State, and to managing the Syrian refugee crisis. But that doesn't mean the United States and European Union should shrug off his troubling predilection for lashing out at perceived foes.

Last week the Turkish government steamrolled the country's biggest newspaper, Zaman, silencing an Erdogan critic and violating the country's tenuous commitment to press freedom. Trustees were appointed to run Zaman, the editor-in-chief was fired, and riot police made a show of force inside and outside the newspaper's offices. When it was over, Zaman's formerly lively front page reported that Erdogan had visited a bridge under construction, but made no mention of the newsroom coup. Yes, from government critic to government mouthpiece, overnight.

Like Russia's authoritarian president, Erdogan is a dominating figure, elected but intolerant of dissent. He led Turkey as prime minister; although the presidency is a supposedly ceremonial post, he reigns as the country's strongman.

In the past two years, Turkey's justice ministry has opened as many as 1,845 criminal cases against citizens accused of insulting the president. In one case, a doctor lost his job for comparing Erdogan to the creature Gollum in "Lord of the Rings." Teens have been charged for ripping down Erdogan posters, or posting unwelcome Facebook comments. Journalists are particular targets: Two from another opposition publication, Cumhuriyet, face serious charges for reporting on alleged arms smuggling to Syria.

In reaction to Zaman's seizure, editors of the English-language version of the newspaper said in a statement: "We are going through the darkest and gloomiest days in terms of freedom of the press, which is a major benchmark for democracy and the rule of law. Intellectuals, businesspeople, celebrities, civil society organizations, media organizations and journalists are being silenced via threats and blackmail. We have entered the last phase in terms of pressure on those who persistently remain independent in their publications."

Turkey is a partner with the U.S. in the war on terrorism, but Erdogan has his own agenda. His main concern, besides burnishing his own image, is putting down a homegrown insurrection against Kurdish rebels. That has made Erdogan a reluctant ally in Syria because the most capable U.S. allies on the ground there are Syrian Kurds. It's tough to count on the Turks, in other words, when they view our friends as their enemies.

Erdogan's other obsession is attacking rivals affiliated with Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish cleric living in exile in Pennsylvania. Gulen is a former Erdogan ally accused of forming a "parallel state." The government's seizure of Zaman appears related to the Gulen crackdown because Gulen has links to Zaman.

Here's what's giving Erdogan the confidence to play his

See TURKEY'S on Next Page

Why this feminist would 'rather go naked'

By INGRID NEWKIRK
The Heritage Foundation

Ingrid Newkirk is the president and founder of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, 1536 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 2003; www.PETA.org. Information about PETA's funding may be found at www.peta.org/about/numbers.asp

Is it odd that a feminist like me, from back in the bra-burning '60s, champions racy protests featuring women wearing little more than body-paint markings that mimic a butcher's diagram? Some might raise an eyebrow, but this March, National Women's History Month, let me explain why I believe that supporting women's rights and stripping for a cause go together like Gloria Steinem and miniskirts.

With feminism, as with all social movements, each generation has its own battles to fight, and while respect is certainly owed those who helped society evolve to this point, today is a new day with new issues to grapple with. I relate best now to the third-wave feminists who are sick of second-wave feminists—ever so ironically taking the place of repressive fathers and husbands—demanding that women cover ourselves up and "behave." How dare we expose our bodies to prying eyes! But dare we do, with more feminists daring to do something more important: to challenge the idea that breasts are to be kept covered like a dirty magazine.

At PETA, which is awash with "uppity women" like me, we'd rather go naked than wear not only fur but leather or wool—any skin. We see animal liberation as a logical part of a philosophy that rejects violence to, and the exploitation of, those who are not exactly like oneself in some way or another. We reject prejudice on the basis of any arbitrary factor such as skin color, gender, sexual orientation, religion or species. For surely there is something fundamentally wrong with moaning about freedom for yourself while denying it to others.

We are all of us composed of flesh and blood. We have faces and feelings and a beating heart, as did the pigs and chickens and other animals who were killed and decapitated for nothing more than a fleeting taste. What is done to them would be the same if it were done to us. And that's the point of provocative PETA campaigns such as our "All Animals Have the Same Parts" protests featuring those aforementioned butcher's diagrams. The scantily clad women who stand out in the cold know that people will stop and stare and that many of them will have never thought about animal rights before. That's the power of their protest.

Instead of attacking the (naked) messenger, who doesn't need anyone's permission to strip, I ask people to put that energy and outrage where it belongs—into taking action against those who would abuse and exploit the most vulnerable among us. Women's rights and animal rights go hand in hand. If you reject violence against women, you can't in good conscience eat bacon and drink milk. Why? Because mother pigs — sows, who are smart as the dickens and who love their precious babies as dearly as any human mother loves hers — are confined to metal crates so small that they can't even turn around and they develop painful ulcers from the constant pressure of lying, nearly immobile, on the unyielding cement floor. Because terrified, crying calves are torn away from their devoted mothers right after birth so that humans can steal the milk that was meant for them. Because factory farm and slaughterhouse workers, who have grueling, dangerous, soul-crushing jobs, often take their frustrations out on female animals by sexually assaulting them — sometimes in their terrifying last moments. The video is on our website and is hard to watch.

I have seen slaughter, have seen pigs beaten and loaded into the trucks on their way to it, and have been disturbed by the unmistakable sorrow and fear on their faces as they rattled down a highway for the first and last time ever. It's the same look that you or I would have. We all feel pain and fear and long for the freedom to live our lives. We're all the same.

With one significant difference.

Unlike the pigs and turkeys and fish and cows, I have choices. I can choose to walk away from meat and eggs and dairy products and continue enjoying my life, opting instead for healthy, humane vegan foods. If you haven't done that yet, please, come join me. Women unite for animal rights!

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Mideast needs new borders

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer*. Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by e-mail at trubin@phillynews.com.*

ERBIL, Iraq—Massoud Barzani, the president of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan, has an urgent message for world leaders:

With the Mideast in chaos and the Islamic State "caliphate" entrenched across swaths of Syria and Iraq, now is the time to rethink the boundaries of the region. But unlike 100 years ago, when Britain and France divided up the Arab world, Mideast leaders must partake in the process.

Part of the Mideast reboot, Barzani hopes, will be the emergence of an independent Iraqi Kurdistan. He wants to hold a nonbinding referendum this year asking his fellow Iraqi Kurds to endorse the idea of independence. (The vote wouldn't involve an actual declaration.)

Barzani is on to something important that Western nations haven't yet grasped.

"There has already been a redrawing of the Middle East," he told me. We were inside his ornate, two-story presidential palace on a mountain overlooking the Kurdish capital. He was dressed in a neatly pressed version of the traditional Kurdish baggy fatigues and his signature red and white headdress.

"If you look at the Middle East, the old borders are only on paper," he said. "There are new realities on the ground."

That is certainly the case in Iraq, where the ouster of Saddam Hussein unleashed sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shiites that has splintered the country. In Syria, the regime's brutal response to a peaceful uprising has torn the country apart, largely on sectarian lines.

This sectarian strife has opened the way for the Islamic State to base itself in Sunni areas on both sides of the Syria-Iraq border. Without separating Sunnis and Shiites from each other—to some degree, since there are still mixed populations in cities—the killings will continue. Those separations could involve new federal regions or more formal separation. But new realities must be taken into account.

As for the Kurds, they have been dreaming of independence since the 1923 Lausanne Treaty between the World War I allies and post-Ottoman Turkey. That document reneged on a promise to carve a Kurdish state out of the remains of the Ottoman empire and allow this non-Arab ethnic group to have its own home.

Iraq's Kurds have had an increasing degree of autonomy since 1991, when the United States protected them with a no-fly zone against Saddam. Despite a severe economic crisis and internal political strains, the Kurdish region is the most stable part of Iraq, and has played a huge role in repelling the Islamic State. It has also welcomed minorities, including tens of thousands of Christian and Yazidi refugees.

Barzani believes an independent Iraqi Kurdistan could be an oasis of stability for the entire Mideast.

I asked whether his vision of statehood would include the Kurdish-populated portions of neighboring Turkey, Iran, and Syria, a prospect that greatly unnerves Ankara and Tehran.

"I think each part of Kurdistan within the last 100 years has its own special status," he answered quickly. "Our focus and strategy is for Iraqi Kurds alone."

Barzani's critics argue that the referendum is only meant as a distraction from his domestic problems. And the external barriers to independence are high:

Iraq's central government opposes independence, as does Iran. Turkey—which has excellent relations with Iraq's Kurds—is unlikely to warm to the idea now that it is embroiled in conflict with its own Kurds and those of Syria.

Moreover, the United States is still wedded to the idea of a unified Iraq, and won't endorse Kurdish independence, as the White House has made clear to Barzani.

The Kurdish leader says he will consult with the neighbors, and with Baghdad. "Independence would be based on talks and dialogue and negotiations with others," he said.

As for Washington, he adds, "If the U.S. will not be against us, will not oppose it, we will be very grateful."

Despite these obstacles, the referendum idea should focus attention on the failure of the current forms of Iraqi and Syrian statehood.

"I think it will be very difficult to have a united Syria again," Barzani says. "A new form of federation or confederation is possible," he suggests, given the multisectarian nature of the country. Otherwise, "after all that bloodshed it's not possible to heal the wounds there."

Barzani believes that Russian intervention in Syria, particularly in the war against the Islamic State, could be in the interest of the Kurds when considering the need for stability.

"A few days ago," he says, "there was a statement from Moscow that federalism is a good solution for Syria and I believe this is a good statement." But, he hastened to add, "it is for the Syrian people to decide."

Would a federal state that gave Sunnis their own autonomous area similar to Kurdistan—a sort of Sunnistan—enable the Iraqi state to survive?

"A Sunnistan is one of the possibilities," Barzani said. Then, only half joking, he added, "On the ground we already have that. It is called Da'esh-istan," using an Arabic name for the Islamic State. "Da'esh eroded all the borders between Syria and Iraq."

As for the Kurds, Barzani insisted that the current federation between Iraqi Arabs and Kurdistan had "failed openly. If it had succeeded, our plans for a referendum might not be on the table."

"Our people must decide (if confederation is possible), but the current status is not possible," he said. "We can't go on like this forever."

Unlike a federal system—with one central government, as we have in the United States—a confederation means a loose link between two independent states.

Ideally, Barzani's referendum—no matter how it turns out—should prod Iraq's neighbors and the West into some new thinking.

For one thing, Washington should back Barzani's ideas on confederation, a format that might hold Iraq (barely) together.

For another, the West should consider his suggestion of "an international conference with the major powers and regional powers to reach a new understanding and consensus ... and to channel this into a broader new order in the area" that might be more stable.

A pipe dream? Perhaps.

But new state structures may be the only way to staunch the region's sectarian bloodletting. As Barzani notes, the old maps are already obsolete.

Get ready to say goodbye to Rubio, terrible candidate

By KEN HERMAN
Austin American-Statesman

We can now project another loser in the 2016 presidential race. We're not talking loser as in Jeb Bush, Rick Perry, Martin O'Malley and the others we've lost along the campaign trail.

We're talking loser as in full-frontal embarrassment to himself and his family and disappointment to his nation. My fellow Americans, let's get ready to bid farewell to U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, who despite his improved behavior and impressive performance in the Thursday GOP debate in Miami, could go down as the most annoying candidate of the year.

And that's in a year when a peculiar fellow named Donald Trump also is running.

I was favorably impressed by Rubio when I saw him at a Dallas campaign event in January. Despite the opportunity to jab U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, Rubio stayed positive and offered an optimistic, upbeat presence.

The tone changed noticeably the next time I saw Rubio in Texas, which was at the Feb. 25 debate in Houston when he aggressively attacked Trump. And the tone bottomed out the next day in Dallas when Rubio, speaking to supporters, went full Don Rickles, taunting Trump for misspelled tweets and suggesting Trump had wet his pants at the debate. Over the next few days, Rubio mocked Trump's "horrible spray tan" and small hands.

Don't get me wrong. I love Rickles. It's just that I don't think insult comedy is necessarily the best shtick for a presidential candidate.

And now neither does Rubio, who a day prior to Thursday's debate told MSNBC he regrets that phase of his campaign.

"In terms of things that have to do with the personal stuff, yeah, at the end of the day it's not something I'm entirely proud of. My kids were embarrassed by it, and if I had to do it again I wouldn't," he said.

"I'm not telling you (Trump) didn't deserve it, but that's not who I am," Rubio said, adding, "I don't want to be that. If that's what it takes to become president of the United States, then I don't want to be president."

So what are we to think of a senator who, for a few days, thought that's what it takes to become president? It's sad because Rubio was strong on a variety of policy issues at Thursday's debate. He limited his non-policy-related attacks on Trump to this tightly stated bit of reality about the loose-lipped frontrunner: "I know that a lot of people find appeal in the things Donald says 'cause he says what people wish they could say. The problem is, presidents can't just say anything they want. It has consequences, here and around the world."

Ditto for presidential candidates, such as Rubio's previous callow, shallow and cynical plunge into consultant-driven misbehavior.

Trump (As Seen On TV!) is Trump. And Cruz is Cruz. Both have been fairly consistent in their campaign personas, though periodically and appropriately changing their focus when conditions demanded. But in his desperate attempts at survival, Rubio showed himself willing to be whatever he thought would work at the moment (and then regretted it when it didn't work). It wasn't Trump who made Rubio "Little Marco." By his embarrassing behavior and middle-school jabs, Rubio made himself small, too small for the big shoes needed in the White House.

And, compared to what we saw from Rubio in Miami on Thursday, that is disappointing.

Let's end with something borrowed, something making the rounds. I just want to make sure you hear it.

Hillary Clinton would be our first female president. Bernie Sanders would be our first Jewish president. Rubio or Cruz would be our first Hispanic president.

Trump would be our last president.

TURKEY'S

From Page 10

games: The U.S. needs access to Incirlik Air Base, the American outpost in southern Turkey, to fly sorties against Islamic State. And the Europeans need Turkey because it's housing several million refugees, many from Syria.

The Europeans are desperate to halt the arrival of more refugees on the continent. The EU is trying to negotiate a deal in which Turkey would take back migrants who enter Europe from its territory. In exchange, Turkey seeks an aid increase of euros by the billions—and it wants to speed up the process of joining the EU. An early demand: visa-free travel to Europe by June for Turkish citizens.

This should be where Erdogan's abhorrent behavior becomes a sticking point. There's no way Turkey should get a pass on its dismal human rights record because it temporarily holds the cards. If Turkey wants to be considered for membership in the EU, an elite club of democracies, it has to uphold democratic values. A good first step would be the liberation of Zaman.

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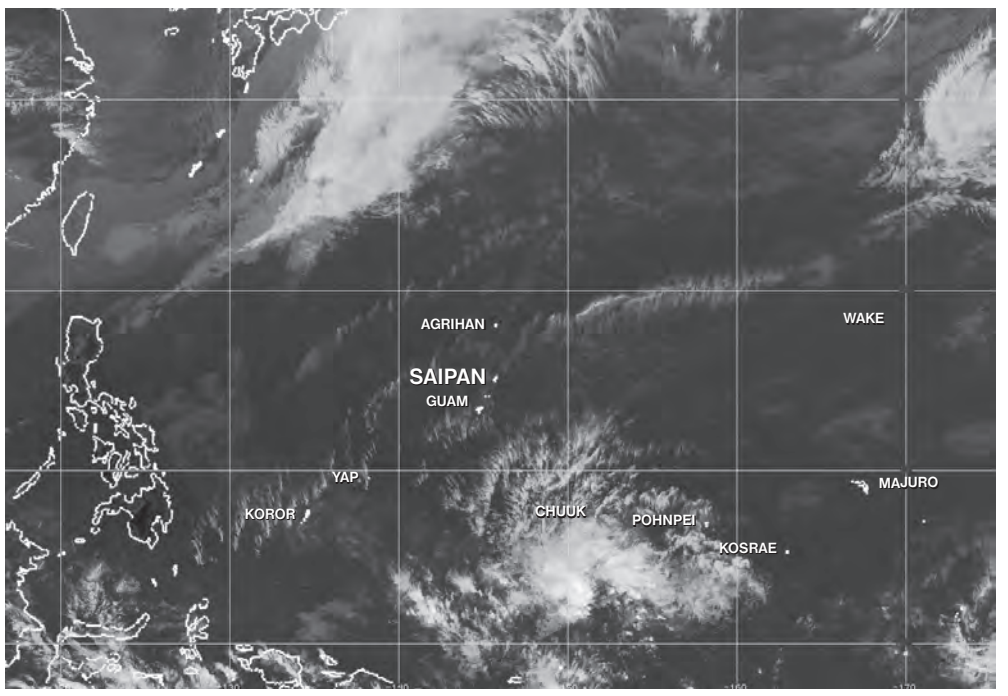
The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. East winds 5 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 PM, MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with a frontal boundary near Okinawa are present north of a line from 25N138E to 22N130. A surface trough heads southeast from 8N130E to EQ144E. Widely scattered showers are seen over Koror between 5N and 10N from 130E to 138E and within 100 miles of a line from 7N138E to 1N143E. Divergent upper-level winds are enhancing numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms near a trade-wind disturbance south of Chuuk and Pohnpei between 2N and 7N from 144E to 161E. Converging trade winds are causing widely-scattered showers east of Butaritari atoll south of a line from 5N180 to EQ172E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲86	▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲87	▼80
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲78	▼64
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲61	▼33
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼62
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼67
London	Cloudy	▲51	▼42
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲70	▼51
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲91	▼75
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲79	▼57
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼68
New York	Rain	▲48	▼44
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼36
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼40
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲56	▼39
Rome	Showers	▲58	▼44
Salem	Rain	▲49	▼40
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲57	▼48
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲51	▼32
Tokyo	Windy	▲56	▼35
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲57	▼48

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:00 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
7:25 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
12:57 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
8:25 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:25 AM	6:27 PM
Wednesday	6:24 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:23 AM	6:27 PM
Friday	6:23 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:22 AM	6:28 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:30 AM	
Wednesday	12:38 AM	12:24 PM
Thursday	1:32 AM	1:18 PM
Friday	2:24 AM	2:11 PM
Saturday	3:12 AM	3:04 PM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Alter City Group is Emerald Sponsor for '16 Green Gala

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Alter City Group presents donation for MINA's 2016 Green Gala.

Alter City Group demonstrated their commitment to Micronesia Island Nature Alliance's work through their $5,000 donation toward the organization's annual Green Gala fundraiser, which will be held on Friday, May 27, 2016 at Fiesta Resort and Spa.

"We greatly appreciate Alter City's valuable contribution," said Frankie Eliptico, chairperson of MINA's Board of Directors. "This donation goes a long way in helping us to continue our work to help sustain our island's natural resources."

For over 10 years, MINA has successfully implemented various conservation projects. MINA's current projects include Tasi Watch Community Rangers, Adopt-A-Bin, Managaha Pride Campaign, and Schools for Environmental Conservation.

In addition to lively entertainment, dinner and a variety of beverages, the Green Gala will feature brief highlights from MINA's projects, a silent auction, and promises to be a memorable evening.

The last two Green Gala events sold out, so organizers are encouraging those who plan to attend to buy their tickets early.

Tickets for the Green Gala event can be purchased at the MINA Office in Gualo Rai, from any of the staff, or from volunteer board members.

There are four categories of sponsorship (Emerald, Title, Major, and Event categories) that correspond to the value of companies' contribution. To become a sponsor of the event, please contact Brooke Nevitt at 233-REEF (7333), or email brookenevitt.mina@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

UOG regents welcome Dr. Ji; elects Sanford chairperson

Ji

Gayle

Sanford

The University of Guam Board of Regents welcomes Dr. Hyo Sang Ji as its newest member. The Legislature recently confirmed Dr. Ji's appointment.

Dr. Ji currently is the anesthesiologist and medical director at the Guam Surgicenter. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition and food science from the University of California Berkeley in 1995. He also completed medical school at St. Luke's College of Medicine in the Philippines in 2005.

Dr. Ji fills the vacancy left by former chairperson William Leon Guerrero who completed his term.

The Board of Regents also recently elected Antoinette Sanford as chairperson and Elizabeth Gayle as vice chairperson.

A UOG graduate, Sanford received a Bachelor of Arts in Business Management and Minored in Accounting and Psychology in 1972. She went on to earn a Masters of Business Administration in Accounting and Finance from American Intercontinental University in 2008. She is the co-founder and President of Sanford Technology Group LLC.

A civil engineer with more than 13 years experience, Gayle is a professional engineer who received her Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from the University of California at Irvine.

The current members of the UOG Board of Regents are:

- Ms. Antoinette "Toni" Sanford, chairperson
- Ms. Elizabeth Gayle, vice chairperson
- Mr. Elvin Chiang, treasurer
- Ms. Jillette Leon Guerrero, regent
- Ms. Mariflor Herrero, regent
- Mr. Chris Felix, regent
- Mr. Joaquin Santos, Jr., regent
- Dr. Hyo Sang Ji, regent
- Mr. Hage-Ae Paul, student regent
- Dr. Robert A. Underwood, executive secretary ***(PR)***

Coast Guard rescues swimmer near Ke'ehi Lagoon in Oahu

HONOLULU—The Coast Guard rescued a 50-year-old female swimmer Sunday, who had reportedly been in the water overnight.

At 11:20 a.m., Sunday, good Samaritans aboard the Navatek I, a tour boat operating out of Honolulu, spotted the woman in distress in the vicinity of Ke'ehi Lagoon.

She was recovered by a 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew from Coast Guard Station Honolulu at 11:30 a.m.

She was taken to Kewalo Basin Harbor where local emergency medical services personnel and the Honolulu Police Department were waiting to provide further assistance. The swimmer reportedly appeared in good condition and declined any medical services.

Watchstanders at Coast Guard Sector Honolulu's command center received a call at 11:25 a.m., Sunday, from the captain of the Navatek I informing them that they located the swimmer approximately 1 mile out of Ke'ehi Lagoon.

The woman reportedly told responders she went swimming between 9 and 10 p.m. Saturday, in the Waikiki area and was taken out to sea by the current.

"It's never a good idea to swim by yourself, especially at night," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Aaron Lenk, a duty watchstander at Sector Honolulu. "If you are going out, inform someone where you plan to go as well as when you plan to return. That way if you do not return promptly, the proper authorities can be notified to search for you. We are happy that she was located safely especially after a long night in the water." ***(PR)***

UOG CNAS hosts presentation on Guam's forest resources

The University of Guam College of Natural and Applied Sciences will be hosting a presentation on Guam's Forest Resources by the USDA Forest Service on Thursday, March 17, from 9am to 11am in Room 104 in the Agriculture and Life Sciences Building on the UOG campus.

Ashley Lehman of USDA Forest Service with Michelle Lazaro (Pacific Islands Data Analyst) will be on Guam March 16 to 20, 2016. During their visit they will be presenting on the US Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Guam data that was collected in 2013 by foresters from Guam Forestry, University of Guam, and US Forest Service staff. The 2013 inventory was a re-measurement of the initial 61 permanent monitoring plots installed in 2002 throughout all of Guam. After the 2013 inventory an additional 60 FIA permanent plots were installed as part of the Micronesia Challenge terrestrial monitoring program. These plots are located on both public and private lands.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
An Ifit seedling sprouts on the forest floor.

Lehman and Lazaro will give a short overview on the type of data collected and describe how to make use of the files. "The data is compiled in a Microsoft access database that we will give out and explain how to use. The first hour of the presentation will be a look at the data and overview of the database and during the second hour we can answer specific questions you may have about the data," said Lehman. Attendees are encouraged to bring a laptop in order to do some hands on querying of the data.

For more information about the USDA Forest Service, visit http://www.fs.fed.us/ and for more information on the College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CNAS) visit http://cnas-re.uog.edu/. ***(PR)***

Business

Pricey tea a growing niche crop in US, even Canada

AP
In this Feb. 29, 2016 photograph, Joshua Watson, left, and Chase White gather tea plants onto racks at The Great Mississippi Tea Company near Brookhaven, Miss.

BROOKHAVEN, Miss. (AP)—After Hurricane Katrina wiped out his timber 11 years ago, Jason McDonald wanted a crop less susceptible to Mississippi's potentially powerful storms.

Low maintenance was also a priority.

"I didn't want to be a cattle farmer and chase down cattle at 3 or 4 in the morning," McDonald said.

A chance encounter with South Carolina tea drew him into the growing ranks of North American farmers from Mississippi to British Columbia who are growing tea for the high-priced specialty market.

There's money to be made because more Americans are willing to pay premium prices for what they consider top quality, tea consultant Nigel Melican said in a phone interview from Bedford, England.

The specialty tea market is growing 8 to 10 percent a year, according to Peter F. Goggi's 2015 market review for the Tea Association of the U.S.A. Inc. Such teas are particularly attractive to millennials, who "find delight in the discovery of new and differentiated flavors, ethnic or new cultural offerings and craft selections," he wrote.

Melican said U.S. wages are too high to compete with overseas farmers who grow the commodity tea commonly found on grocery shelves.

For example, a 4-ounce box of 50 Lipton black tea bags can be found online for $3, while Connecticut-based Bigelow Tea sells the South Carolina-grown product at $7.95 for a box of 12 tea bags weighing less than an ounce.

Compared with some prices, that's peanuts.

Eliah Halpenny of Big Island Tea on the Mauna Loa volcano in Hawaii sells her black and green teas wholesale for about $42 an ounce. Her online retail prices work out to more than $75 an ounce.

Light of Day Organic Teas in Traverse City, Michigan, where plastic-covered "hoop houses" shelter tea plants eight months of the year, sells its home-grown white tea for $256 a pound or $32 for a 1.5-ounce tin. It takes 70,000 hand-picked leaf buds to make a pound of white tea, owner Angela Macke said.

"I don't recommend it to anyone as a commercial crop. You've got to love it," Macke said in a phone interview.

About 60 U.S. farms, with only a handful created before 2000, are growing tea, said Tygh Waters, president of the U.S. League of Tea Growers and founder of Piedmont Tea Co. in Athens, Georgia. Tea is grown in at least 15 states and the Canadian province of British Columbia. Outside of Hawaii, it generally takes about five years for plants to grow big enough to survive repeated harvests, Walters said.

Would Trump's trade threats work? Many experts are skeptical

WASHINGTON (AP)—Donald Trump has promised to shred America's trade deals and impose fines on imports from Mexico and China. He's gone so far as to swear off Oreos to protest Nabisco's transfer of cookie production from Chicago to Mexico.

By attacking trade agreements, the Republican presidential front-runner is channeling the belief, common among many of this year's angry voters, that foreign competition is robbing American jobs and shrinking wages.

"We're being killed on trade—absolutely destroyed," Trump says.

His assault on trade deals—which in some ways echoes arguments of Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders—seems to be winning politics. But Trump's analysis of how trade hurts American workers is flawed, and as president, he would struggle to deliver on his promises.

The United States does have an unbalanced trade relationship with other nations. Last year, it imported $2.76 trillion in goods and services and exported just $2.22 trillion. That $540 billion gap—the trade deficit—was the seventh-biggest on record. Not since 1975 has the United States run a trade surplus.

A trade deficit slows economic growth and can cost jobs. Last year, the U.S. trade gap shrank growth by 0.6 percentage point to a modest 2.4 percent.

Trump, author of the 1987 best-seller "The Art of the Deal," argues that American negotiators are snookered by smarter deal-makers in China, Mexico and Japan who manage to penetrate the U.S. market without granting equal access to their own. He and his team, which he has said would include corporate takeover artist Carl Icahn, could easily do better, he says.

An assessment of his trade case:

Many economists call Trump's arguments off-base. Trade deals usually have little overall effect on jobs—positive or negative—partly because the American economy is already open to foreign competition. Bigger forces such as huge wage gaps between the United States and developing countries, and automation that lets companies replace workers, play a much larger role in job losses.

"We're running large trade deficits, and those do cost us jobs," says C. Fred Bergsten, director emeritus of the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "Almost none of that can be traced to trade agreements, bad, good or otherwise. Trade agreements always have a small net effect on jobs."

In Atlantic salmon fight, Greenland proves a sticking point

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Preventing the long-imperiled Atlantic salmon from disappearing from American waters will require the U.S. to put pressure on Inuit fishermen in Greenland to stop harvesting a fish that has fed them for hundreds of years, federal officials say.

The salmon were once found from Long Island Sound to Canada, but their population has cratered in the face of river damming, warming ocean waters, competition for food with non-native fish and, officials say, continued Greenlandic fishing.

Now, federal officials have outlined an ambitious plan to try to save the Atlantic salmon that they say will require removing dams, creating fish passages and fostering cooperation from Inuit fishermen some 2,000 miles away from Maine, where most of America's last wild Atlantic salmon spawn.

"We've tried everything possible to negotiate with Greenland to find alternatives to find out how they can lessen impacts on U.S. fish," said Dan Kircheis, a fisheries biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service. "This is part of their culture, this is part of who they are, this is something they've always done. We are trying to work with them to realize the fish they are fishing for originate in Canada, in U.S. waters, in Europe, and these populations are in decline."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has said the final remnants of the wild Atlantic salmon population in U.S. waters live in a handful of rivers and streams in central and eastern Maine. A 2014 count found less than 300 salmon in the Penobscot River, which has the largest wild Atlantic salmon population in the country.

Federal authorities listed the Gulf of Maine's Atlantic salmon population as endangered in 2000. They were once found in almost every river north of the Hudson, but since the 18th century they have declined to just 11 rivers, NOAA has said. The Atlantic salmon and the Pacific Chinook salmon are the largest salmon species.

Atlantic are the most commonly farmed species of salmon, and demand has grown exponentially since the 1990s. Farms produced more than 2 million tons of the salmon, prized for its high protein content and omega-3 fatty acids, for the first time in 2012.

Iran says US companies welcome to invest in petroleum sector

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—U.S. companies are welcome to invest in Iran's oil and gas industry, the Iranian oil minister said on Sunday.

State-run Press TV quoted Bijan Namdar Zangeneh as saying that "in general, we have no problem with the presence of American companies in Iran."

He said it is the U.S. government that is "creating restrictions for these companies," without elaborating. Zangeneh also confirmed that Iran's state-run oil company has held talks with General Electric.

"Of course, my deputy conducted these negotiations and when I inquired about them, it was said that the talks were positive," he said.

The TV report said Zangeneh also asked Siemens executives to invest in Iran's oil and gas industry.

"The German company must come to Iran to build equipment and parts needed in our oil industry and manufacture them here," he said.

All sanctions related to Iran's nuclear program were lifted in January under a landmark agreement reached with world powers, but the U.S. maintains separate sanctions related to Iran's ballistic missile program and its support for State Department-designated terrorist groups.

Iran is trying to regain its share of the global petroleum market after the removal of sanctions.

Saudi Arabia, Russia, Venezuela and Qatar floated the idea of a production cap last month with the aim of boosting global oil prices, but it was conditional on other producers joining in. Iran, which is eager to jumpstart its oil industry, has so far resisted.

Zangeneh dismissed the idea of a production freeze by Iran as "a joke", according to the TV report. He said Iran will take part in discussions on a possible oil production freeze after its output reaches 4 million barrels per day.

"As long as we have not reached 4 million bpd in production, they should leave us alone," Zangeneh said.

Nation

GOP hopeful Trump stands by campaign rhetoric

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—Showing few signs of trying to ease the nation's tense political atmosphere, Republican front-runner Donald Trump is standing by his antagonistic campaign rhetoric, rejecting any responsibility for violence at his rallies and defending his supporters who have been charged with assaulting protesters.

"We're not provoking. We want peace. ... We don't want trouble," he told a large crowd in Bloomington, Illinois, the first of three comparatively docile events from Illinois to Florida as he campaigned ahead of another critical slate of large-state primaries.

■■■

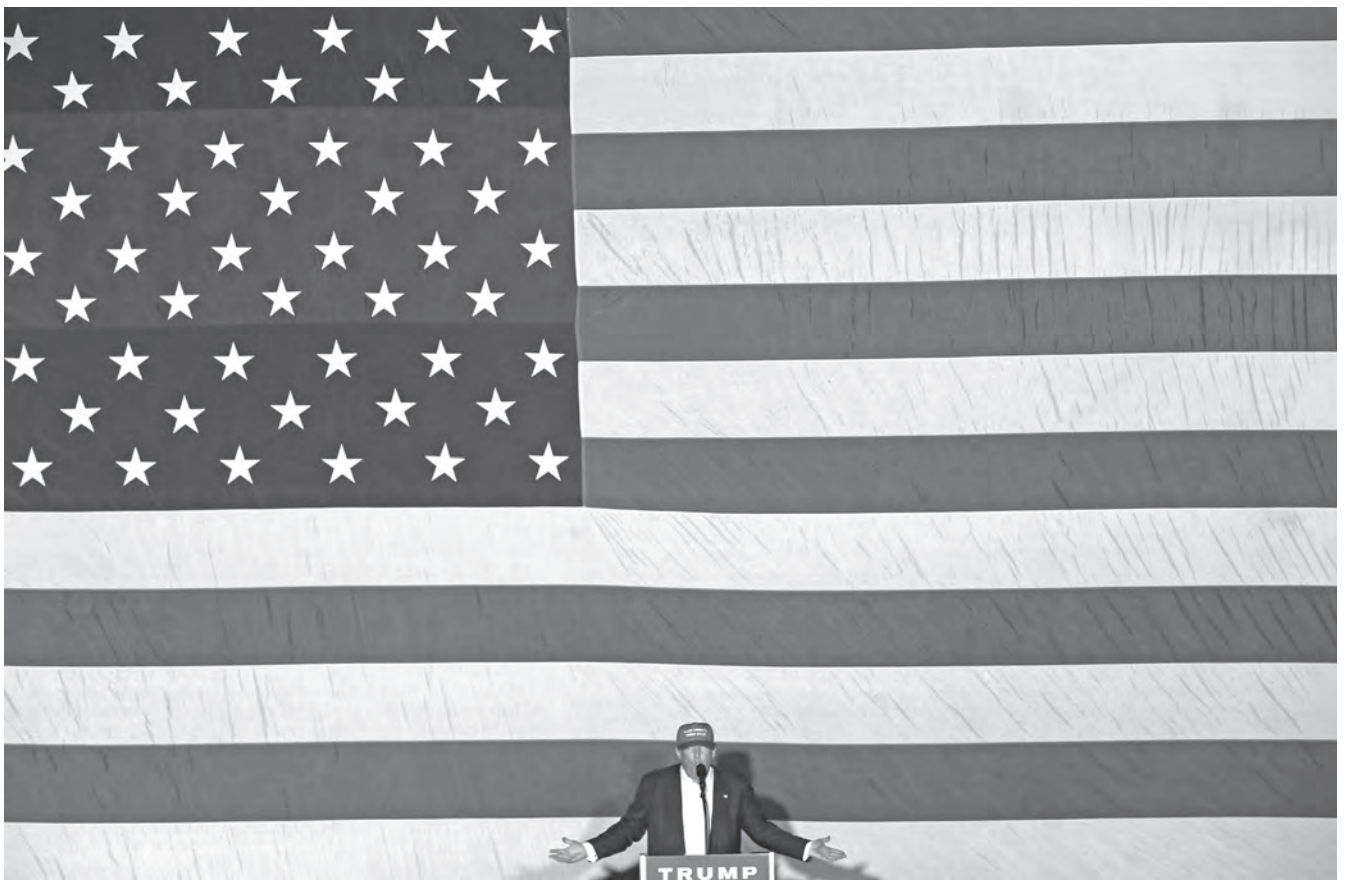
CLEVELAND (AP)—A man arrested Saturday after he tried to get on the stage at a Donald Trump campaign rally in Ohio reportedly told police he planned to grab the microphone and yell that Trump is a racist but didn't intend to hurt anyone.

The Dayton Daily News reported that it obtained a report from Dayton police that included comments 22-year-old Thomas DiMassimo of Fairborn made to officers after his arrest. The newspaper said DiMassimo told officers he gave his car keys to his girlfriend before he rushed the stage because he anticipated being arrested.

The newspaper said DiMassimo vaulted over waist-high metal railings, muscled past security guards and nearly got on the stage at the end of Trump's rally before Secret Service agents tackled and handcuffed him. Video shows Trump, the front-runner in the Republican presidential campaign, turning around after hearing the commotion followed by agents surrounding him protectively. Trump was campaigning ahead of Tuesday's Ohio primary

■■■

Trump's remarks came after a near-riot Friday night in Chicago as Trump canceled a scheduled rally amid widespread altercations among his supporters, detractors and authorities.



AP
Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally in Boca Raton, Fla., Sunday, March 13, 2016.

His three-state tour also came less than 48 hours before polls open in a five-state slate that could determine whether he wins the GOP nomination without a contested summer convention.

Against that backdrop, Trump continued to blame protesters, media and even Democratic presidential hopeful Bernie Sanders for the increasingly caustic campaign environment that his rivals assailed as "cause for pause" and certain "to do damage to America."

Interrupted only sparingly at his events throughout the day, Trump assured his backers their frustration is righteous rage against a corrupt political and economic system. He cast his naysayers as "bad people" that "do harm to the country."

Though by the end of the night, he seemed to miss the commotion.

ACROSS THE NATION

Maryland police: Officer dies after shooting; 2 in custody

CHEVERLY, Md. (AP)—Police were going about their business on a Sunday afternoon when a gunman fired at the first officer he saw outside a Maryland police station, prompting a gun battle that left an undercover narcotics officer dead and the suspect wounded, authorities say. Prince George's County Police Chief Hank Stawinski said Jacai Colson, a four-year veteran of the department only days shy of his 29th birthday, died in the "unprovoked attack" outside the station. The shooting erupted in Landover, a suburb about 10 miles northeast of downtown Washington, D.C. Speaking at a news conference, Stawinski said that once the first shot was fired, several officers fired back at the suspect. He couldn't say how many shots were exchanged in the confrontation that began about 4:30 p.m. "Those officers did not shrink. They bravely advanced and engaged this individual," the chief said.

Divers stop search for 3rd Hudson River tugboat crash victim

NEW YORK (AP)—Police divers late Sunday stopped searching inside a sunken tugboat for the body of a third crew member who went missing after the boat crashed into a barge on the Hudson River north of New York City. "It has moved from a rescue and recovery operation to a salvage operation," said Westchester County Police spokesman Kieran O'Leary, who added that county police helicopter and marine unit boats will resume searching the river surface Monday on the remote chance the body of Harry Hernandez, 56, of Staten Island, New York, was ejected from the boat. O'Leary said police dive operations ceased permanently because divers were not able to access a section of the tugboat where they believe his body is located due to severe damage. The 90-foot tugboat named Specialist hit a barge early Saturday morning near where the new Tappan Zee Bridge, which connects two counties north of New York City, is being built. The tugboat sank, spilling about 5,000 gallons of fuel into the water.

Rubio's political reckoning arrives in Florida primary

MIAMI (AP)—Florida Sen. Marco Rubio was among the Republican Party's biggest stars when he burst onto the national stage in the tea party wave of 2010. Now, he is facing a home-state showing on Tuesday that could devastate his 2016 presidential campaign and damage his political brand for years to come.

The Cuban-American's desire to become the nation's first Hispanic president, and his past support for a forgiving immigration policy, have failed to excite conservative primary voters who instead have flocked to Donald Trump's nativist politics.

"Marco's always had good timing. This time, the timing just wasn't there," said Albert Lorenzo, who managed Rubio's first state house campaign nearly two decades ago and stays in close contact with him.

Yet Lorenzo, like those closest to Rubio, suggest that should his bid end in disappointment, the senator's career in public service is far from over. The 44-year-old Republican could run for Florida governor in two years, president in four years or even his own Senate seat later this year.

"He's a talent you don't find," Lorenzo said.

Added Rubio ally, Miami city commissioner Francis Suarez: "I can't think of anybody more popular in Florida than he is—except maybe the man he's losing to."

Indeed, the first-term senator has been looking up at Trump in Florida preference polls for months. Rubio is the decided underdog to the billionaire businessman in Tuesday's do-or-die home-state contest.

Despite long odds, Rubio insists he's focused only on winning his party's 2016 presidential nomination.

"I haven't even thought about what I'm having for lunch today, much less what I'm going to run for in two years or nothing at all," he told reporters in West Palm Beach this week.

"If I never hold public office again, I'm comfortable with that," Rubio continued. "I can't tell you what's going to happen two to four years from now. But I have no plans. No thoughts. No contemplation. No meetings. Nothing about any future political run of any sort."

Louisiana, Mississippi: Thousands of homes damaged in floods

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Widespread flooding in Louisiana and Mississippi has damaged thousands of homes and the risk of more flooding played out Sunday as rain-filled rivers rose over banks.

At least four deaths have been reported in Louisiana, including that of an elderly man, authorities said. Two fishermen have been missing for days in Mississippi.

In northwest Tennessee, more than a dozen homes were evacuated late Saturday after heavy rains breached a levee, according to emergency officials.

Flood warnings were in effect across the region as many rivers remained dangerously high.

Also of concern was another line of thunderstorms that was expected to hit parts of Oklahoma, Arkansas, northern Louisiana and northern Mississippi Sunday night. Hail and tornadoes were possible, forecasters said.

But Davyon Hill, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Shreveport, said this storm system was not expected to drop the kind of record-setting rains that the region has seen recently.

"At this point, any rain will aggravate the flooding situation," he said. "But these (storms) are kind of fast moving and isolated."

In Louisiana, emergency officials said more than 4,958 homes were damaged. That number is expected to rise as more reports come in from areas still battling floodwaters. Mississippi reported that 185 homes were damaged by floodwaters and about 650 homes sustained minor damage.

On Sunday, President Barack Obama signed an order declaring the flooding in Louisiana a major disaster. The president's declaration triggers federal aid for flood victims.

Louisiana Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser said he was worried that many flood victims had not purchased flood insurance.

"A lot of these people I spoke to did not have flood insurance because they had never flooded before," Nungesser said in a telephone interview

He warned that residents may not get federal disaster aid if they didn't have insurance. "It's not going to be the open check book," he added.

Downpours—part of a system affecting Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee and Alabama—have submerged roads and cars, washed out bridges and forced residents to flee homes.

Asia

China pledges new push vs 'hostile forces,' separatists

BEIJING (AP)—China's chief prosecutor said Sunday that battling "infiltration, subversion and sabotage by hostile forces" is a key priority this year, with terrorists, ethnic separatists and religious extremists all in his crosshairs.

In a speech to the annual session of China's national legislature, Cao Jianmin also listed combatting cybercrime and ensuring national sovereignty in cyberspace as items topping the list of 2016 priorities.

Prosecutors will also continue to follow up on cases brought to as part of an almost three-year-old nationwide anti-corruption campaign spearheaded by the ruling Communist Party's watchdog agency, Cao said.

Although he identified no specific groups or individuals as threats, Beijing has in the past cited a long list of "hostile forces" it accuses of seeking to end communist rule and plunge China into chaos, division and economic ruin.

Those include agents of foreign governments, civil society groups who challenge the party's absolute authority, religious dissenters such as the underground church and the banned Falun Gong meditation sect. Those campaigning for ethnic rights are also frequently cited, including exiled Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama and advocates for the Turkic Muslim Uighur minority from the northwestern region of Xinjiang.

In an accompanying address to the legislature, top judge Zhou Qiang said Chinese courts convicted 1,419 people last year of national security and terrorism crimes that carry potential death sentences. That compares with 712 people sentenced for incitement to separatism, terrorism and related charges in 2014, before last year's passage of a sweeping new national security law.

Fighting corruption also remains a priority, with prosecutors handling 4,490 cases involving more than 1 million yuan ($154,000) last year, up 22.5 percent from 2014, Cao said in his report. That was out of a total of 54,249 officials investigated, Cao said.

Those prosecuted for graft last year include 22 former officials at the ministerial level or above, including Zhou Yongkang, a past member of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee who was sentenced to life in prison for corruption.

Australia raises case of detained newsmen with Malaysia

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia is concerned about the detention of two Australian journalists who attempted to interview the Malaysian prime minister over corruption allegations, the foreign minister said Monday.

Australian Broadcasting Corp. television reporter Linton Besser and camera operator Louie Eroglu were arrested in the city of Kuching on Saturday after approaching Prime Minister Najib Razak on the street.

They were detained by Malaysian police for six hours and told to remain in Kuching while authorities decided whether they should be charged, ABC said.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop suggested the detention was part of a Malaysian crackdown on press freedom and said Australia was raising their case at the "highest levels within the Malaysian government."

"I'm always concerned where there are instances of a crackdown on freedom of speech in democracies, particularly, and I'm also concerned about the freedom that journalists have to carry out their work in places around the world," Bishop told reporters during a visit to Fiji.

The Malaysian news agency Bernama cited national police chief Khalid Abu Bakar as saying officials would discuss with Attorney-General Mohamed Apandi Ali whether to charge the pair.

Najib is engulfed in a scandal over $681 million deposited into his bank accounts in early 2013. Critics accuse him of corruption and say the money came from an indebted state investment fund which he founded in 2009.

In January, Apandi decided not to prosecute the prime minister, saying the money was a "personal donation" from the Saudi royal family.

ASIAN BRIEFS

8 killed in chemical accident at Thai bank's headquarters

BANGKOK (AP)—A bank in Thailand says eight workers were killed in the basement of its Bangkok headquarters after mistakenly releasing chemicals during an upgrade of the building's fire safety system. Siam Commercial Bank says seven other people were injured in the accident Sunday night. The bank said in a statement Monday that the accident was believed to have been caused by "negligence on the part of our contractors hired to improve fire protection of the building." It said workers activated a system that released pyrogen aerosol, which is normally intended to deprive fire of oxygen. The bank identified those who died as a security guard and seven contractors. It said police were still investigating what went wrong.

Taiwan launches database on areas vulnerable to quake damage

BEIJING (AP)—Earthquake-prone Taiwan is launching a database to inform residents which areas might be susceptible to creating potentially catastrophic sinkholes in the event of a quake. The Central Geological Survey's research tool that debuted Monday shows the potential for soil liquefaction, in which the ground subsides, endangering buildings above. The phenomenon is believed to have caused a 17-story apartment building in the southern city of Tainan to topple after a magnitude-6.4 quake struck on Feb. 6. The system sends color-coded alerts to computers and smartphones.

Coal mine collapse in Pakistan kills 8, another 4 missing

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—A Pakistani official says heavy rain has caused the collapse of a coal mine in the country's northwest, killing at least eight miners and leaving another four missing and feared dead. Local administration official Dost Mohammad said Sunday that the mine in the Orakzai tribal region collapsed the previous evening. He says military rescuers succeeded in saving 29 miners despite being hampered by the continuing rain. Another official, Latifur Rehman, says heavy rains in other parts of the northwest have led to the deaths of seven people in two days due to collapsing roofs and walls.

World

Car bomb in Turkey's capital kills at least 34, wounds 125

ANKARA, Turkey (AP)—A suicide car bomb went off near bus stops in the heart of Turkey's capital on Sunday, killing at least 34 people and wounding around 125 others, officials said. Two of the dead are believed to be the assailants.

AP

Emergency services work at the explosion site in the busy center of Turkish capital, Ankara, Turkey, Sunday, March 13, 2016.

A senior government official told The Associated Press that police suspect that Kurdish militants carried out the attack, which occurred on Ankara's main boulevard, close to ministries.

At least one of the bombers was a woman, he said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity on the grounds that the investigation was ongoing.

The bombing was the third in the city in five months and came as Turkey is grappling with a host of issues, including renewed fighting with Kurdish rebels, threats from the Islamic State group and a Syrian refugee crisis.

Earlier Sunday, Turkish authorities said they were imposing curfews on two mainly Kurdish towns where Turkey's security forces were set to launch large-scale operations against Kurdish militants. Russia on Sunday also accused Turkey of sending its military across the Syrian border to prevent Kurdish groups there from consolidating their positions.

The attack came just three weeks after a suicide car bombing in the capital targeted buses carrying military personnel, killing 29 people. A Kurdish militant group which is an offshoot of an outlawed rebel group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, claimed responsibility for the Feb. 17 attack.

Ivory Coast: Extremists kill 14 civilians, 2 special forces

GRAND-BASSAM, Ivory Coast (AP)—Armed men attacked an Ivory Coast beach resort Sunday, killing at least 16 people and sending tourists fleeing through the historic town of Grand-Bassam in an attack claimed by al-Qaida's North Africa branch.

Bloody bodies were sprawled on the beach and witnesses described horrific scenes as a lazy weekend afternoon was shattered by the West Africa's latest extremist strike.

Ivory Coast's President Alassane Ouattara told reporters at the scene that 14 civilians, two special forces and six assailants were killed when the gunmen stormed the beach. The president arrived in Grand-Bassam a few hours after the attack, visiting the hotels and saluting security forces for their quick response.

"I present my condolences to the families of the people who were murdered, and of course I am very proud of our security forces who reacted so fast," Ouattara said outside the Etoile du Sud, one of the targeted hotels. "The toll could've been much heavier."

Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for the attack, according to SITE Intelligence Group which monitors jihadist websites. The Islamic extremist group made the declaration in a post to its Telegram channels, calling three of the attackers "heroes" for the assault.

The bursts of gunfire sent people running from the beach at Grand-Bassam, a UNESCO World Heritage site and popular destination for Ivorians and foreigners about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Abidjan, Ivory Coast's commercial center. It was the third major attack on a tourism center in West Africa since November.

Big turnout for protests urging ouster of Brazil's president

SAO PAULO (AP)—Brazilians ratcheted up the heat for embattled President Dilma Rousseff on Sunday, turning out by the tens of thousands for demonstrations across the country calling for her ouster.

The biggest protest took place in Brazil's economic capital, Sao Paulo, a bastion of simmering dissatisfaction with Rousseff and her governing Workers' Party. The respected Datafolha polling agency estimated about 500,000 people took part in the Sao Paulo demonstration, while police estimates put turnout at nearly three times that number.

Organizers said about 1 million people joined the anti-Rousseff demonstration in Rio de Janeiro.

In a statement, Rousseff said, "The peaceful character of this Sunday's demonstrations shows the maturity of a country that knows how to co-exist with different opinions and knows how to secure respect to its laws and institutions."

The street rallies came two days after she rejected the idea of resigning.

The demonstrations add to an already-difficult position of Rousseff. She faces the twin problems of an impeachment effort in congress over alleged fiscal mismanagement amid the worst recession in decades and the sprawling investigation by federal prosecutors into corruption at state-run oil giant Petrobras that has moved closer to her inner circle in recent weeks.

Analysts said the strong turnout at the protests could further hamper Rousseff's ability to fight for her political survival and could lead to the unraveling of her fragile governing coalition.

"There is a situation of ungovernability," said Francisco Fonseca, a political science professor at Pontifical Catholic University in Sao Paulo. "The president has few cards."

Focus

AP

In this Jan. 29, 2016 photo, Steven Gibbs, stands with his wife, Debbie, in the motel room they share with their daughter and son-in-law in Murfreesboro, Tenn. Gibbs, whose disability check and wife's wages don't leave enough for an apartment security deposit, says he could never satisfy a probation officer who wanted $45 every week for company fees and court fines.

Poor offenders pay high price when probation turns on profit

By ADAM GELLER and SHARON COHEN
AP NATIONAL WRITERS

MURFREESBORO, Tennessee (AP)—Outside the $200-a-week motel room that Steven Gibbs and his family call home, the afternoon sun sparkled. Inside, though, he had the curtains pulled tight. After working third shift at a round-the-clock McDonalds, his wife, Debbie, sat on the edge of one bed, her eyes closed. But the hour didn't matter.

"Half the time I'm scared to go outside the door," said Gibbs, 61, a former construction worker jailed twice since late 2013 after he couldn't pay hundreds of dollars in probation fees for driving on a suspended license. Despite a court order barring the county and a private probation company from jailing him again, those fears lingered.

"I don't trust none of them anymore," Gibbs said, in late January. The company continued charging him fees until last week, when a judge agreed to put him on a new plan, supervised instead by the court, to pay down fines he owes the county.

Probation is supposed to substitute for jail or prison, requiring offenders to report regularly and maintain good behavior. But in this fast-growing county outside Nashville and more than a dozen states, probation for misdemeanors is a profit-making—and increasingly contentious—venture.

Those with cash to pay fines when they're convicted often avoid supervision, while poor offenders can be snared in a cycle of debt and punishment. Critics of for-profit probation say it can create a modern "debtor's prison."

Rutherford County is just the latest hotspot in a widening debate over this system, which has spurred numerous lawsuits demanding change. Some communities have abandoned for-profit probation, others are vowing reform.

"It's not supposed to be about the money," says the local sheriff, Robert Arnold, noting that he chooses words carefully in a county sued for its use of for-profit probation. "The unfortunate part of our judicial system is once you get caught up in it, it's like a rat wheel you can never get out of because of some of the fines and the probation."

Gibbs, whose disability check and wife's wages don't leave enough for an apartment security deposit, says he could never satisfy a probation officer who wanted $45 every week for company fees and court fines. He was jailed for failure to pay in late 2013, then jailed again last July after failing a drug test the company charged $20 to administer.

Local officials and the probation company agreed recently to end their contract at the end of March. The federal judge who granted an injunction against the county and company pointed to a 1983 Supreme Court decision that courts cannot jail people just because they can't afford fines. The county mayor, citing a responsibility to taxpayers, has recommended the county take over the job.

But more than 1,000 courts, most in the South but ranging to Michigan and Washington state, sign over supervision of misdemeanor offenders to private companies.

The arrangement is praised as a way to uphold justice and improve collection of fines while saving money for governments. Critics, though, call it unfair, saying probation funded entirely by charging offenders piles costs on people who can't pay and jails them for offenses as innocuous as traffic tickets.

"You don't criminalize poverty," says Hub Harrington, who, as an Alabama circuit judge, called one city's private probation program a "judicially sanctioned extortion racket" when he shut it down in 2012. "If you turn the courthouse into a profit center, this is what you get."

In the debate over how to punish crime, most attention focuses on jails and prisons—but that overlooks nearly 9 million Americans on probation.

People on probation for the most serious crimes, felonies, are supervised by public agencies. But 44 percent of those on probation were sentenced for misdemeanors such as shoplifting or simple drug possession or lesser infractions like running a stop sign.

In the 1970s, some states began delegating supervision of misdemeanor offenders to cities and counties to cut costs. A Florida judge contracted with the Salvation Army, setting up a program funded by charging offenders monthly fees, the first privatization of probation.

By the 1990s, for-profit companies began lobbying for the contracts, says John McMahon, director of corrections for the Salvation Army's Florida division. The nonprofit still handles probation for eight Florida counties, but has been replaced by companies in about 20 others.

People convicted of lesser offenses can often avoid probation burdens by paying fines and court costs immediately. Those who can't must report to a probation officer, usually weekly, and comply with orders to, for example, avoid alcohol or undergo counseling.

The companies charge offenders supervision fees averaging $40 to $45 a month, and most also collect court-imposed fines and court costs. They also levy other charges—for orientation, drug tests and counseling sessions. Some probationers are charged fees to participate in litter pickup or other assignments that reduce their obligations.

"The system is designed to sell as many probation services as possible," says Jack Long, a Georgia attorney who has brought 18 suits against one company, Sentinel Offender Services. "For each service they sell, they make a profit." He calls the system "cash register justice."

In late February, Long won a jury verdict in Augusta, Georgia, against Sentinel in a suit filed by a woman who'd been repeatedly jailed for probation violations. She was awarded $50,000.

Steven Queen, Sentinel's director of Georgia Services, disputes the notion that his company runs up fees, regardless of probationers' ability to pay.

"There is no intent, practice, behavior or policy that in any way promotes the exploitation of any participant, regardless of financial position," Queen said in a letter responding to questions from The Associated Press.

People are given opportunities to show financial hardships, and courts can sentence them to alternatives such as community service, Queen says. But, he adds, for people guilty of offenses like domestic violence or repeated drunken driving, probation matches them with court-ordered counseling.

Privatized probation also has allowed government to focus resources on felons while saving taxpayers millions of dollars, says John Prescott, president of the Community Corrections Association of Georgia, an industry group, in a written response to questions.

Leanne Alarid, a professor of criminal justice at the University of Texas at El Paso, says some courts and companies partner effectively, but others have lost sight of probation's intent.

"It has "morphed into, not cost-sharing, but a reliance on the probationer to pay for 100 percent of the cost," she says.

Some companies reward probation officers for collecting fees. Sentinel offered $500 bonuses and a $1,000 prize in a "March Madness" contest for workers who met or exceeded collection goals, a document filed in the recent Georgia case shows.

In Harpersville, Alabama, private probation was an abusive system, according to Harrington, the retired judge who closed the system there.

He said the probation company threatened and harassed people it knew couldn't pay, including a mentally disabled man who'd been involuntarily committed several times by a probate judge. "They jailed him and were extorting money from his family to let him out ... and the only income he had was Social Security disability," Harrington says.

Private probation based on fees also violates people's rights because it imposes a different punishment on one group, Harrington argues. "A $200 ticket," he says, "should cost $200. Period. End of story. You can't charge a poor person more."

Some veterans of the business question the extent of abuses.

"I just don't know that they're as widespread as they're made out to be," says Dale Allen, chief probation officer in Clarke County, Georgia. Allen has worked for both public and for-profit probation operators.

Some people simply want to escape fines, he says. "It's easier to say I can't afford to pay something, but what's the truth?"

Continued on Next Page

AP

In this Jan. 29, 2016 photo, Steven Gibbs, 61, sits in the motel room he shares with his wife, Debbie, and their daughter and son-in-law in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Many governments contracting with probation companies are in a financial bind, says Chris Albin-Lackey, author of a 2014 Human Rights Watch report on for-profit supervision. But judges too often fail to consider whether someone has the ability to pay, and the contractor has a financial incentive to do the same, he says.

"You see a lot of cases where people are trying to explain to their probation officer why they honestly cannot afford to pay," he says, "and essentially the response from the probation officer is, 'I don't want to hear that. You don't pay that, I'm going to throw you in jail.'"

The lunch tables at The Journey Home, an outreach center for Murfreesboro's homeless, are emptying fast. Wait here, Marguerita Scroggins says.

Shouldering a daypack carrying her teddy bear, Jo Jo, Scroggins heads for the woods where she sleeps. When she returns, she spreads out paperwork documenting her arrest last fall for possession of a crack pipe. It instructs her to report to the probation company every Tuesday and to bring $45 each time to cover its fees and court fines. Her address is listed as the homeless center.

"They knew I was homeless because I wrote it down," she says.

Scroggins, 54, says her only income is a $744 monthly disability check. She is facing $1,200 in fines and court costs. On her first visit to the probation office, she says, she brought an instant coffee jar holding $3 in change. The probation officer told her they didn't take cash.

After nine years of running the Journey Home ministry, Scott Foster says he's used to seeing the men and women who come in one day for lunch show up the next on the sheriff's mug shot app. Charged for trespassing or public intoxication, most wind up on probation, and often in jail.

"You tell the judge you couldn't pay but that you're trying to do better, you're trying to make ends meet, and so they basically start your probation over again," he says. "So essentially, for our very indigent folks, we've almost set up a debtor's prison here in 21st century suburban America."

Lawsuits in a number of states have spotlighted tensions between companies and offenders.

■ Georgia is considered the capital of private probation. As of last March, there were 182,000 misdemeanor probation cases, about 80 percent of them supervised by for-profit companies, state officials say.

More than 30 probation companies operate in Georgia. Many are local firms, but one, Judicial Correction Services, is a subsidiary of a jail health care contractor partly owned by a private equity firm with billions of dollars in investments.

The 2014 Human Rights Watch report that cited widespread problems in Georgia's system estimated that private companies collect about $40 million a year from the people they supervise. Georgia law considers traffic offenses to be criminal, creating an additional group of probationers.

The Southern Center for Human Rights sued one company, Red Hills Community Probation, alleging it was threatening to or illegally detaining traffic violators and others and also requiring probationers to pay fines and fees after their sentences had ended.

Adel Edwards of Pelham, Georgia, who is mentally disabled, pleaded guilty to burning leaves in his yard without a permit. A judge fined him $500 and placed him on a year's probation. He also was required to pay a $44 monthly fee to Red Hills, increasing his debt to $1,028.

Edwards lived on food stamps in a house without running water. When he couldn't pay, he was jailed for a few days until his cousin's boyfriend came up with $250 to get him released, according to Sarah Geraghty, a center lawyer.

After Edwards' probation expired, a Red Hills officer ordered him to continue reporting and make more payments, which he did several times, according to the lawsuit. "I think we have to ask ourselves ... How is this promoting public safety or public welfare?" Geraghty adds. Red Hills closed last year. A lawyer for the company denied it engaged in any wrongdoing.

■ In Alabama, JCS pulled out of the state last year after lawsuits brought by the Southern Poverty Law Center and others saw dozens of towns cancel contracts. The law center's suit accused the company of racketeering and extortion.

The company has also withdrawn from Mississippi, where it and the city of Biloxi face a lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union for jailing probationers who lacked money to pay fees and fines. The parties are attempting to negotiate a settlement.

JCS declined comment on the lawsuits or its reasons for withdrawing, but defended its work.

"We believe that JCS provides an important service to those municipal governments that do not possess the resources to enforce the terms of the court's probation and fine rulings," the company told AP.

■ In Tennessee, a suit brought on behalf of Steven Gibbs and six other probationers, alleging racketeering and violation of due process, has cast scrutiny on Rutherford County and its probation company, PCC.

In an interim ruling in December, a federal judge concluded people who violated probation terms often had their supervision extended, incurring more fees they couldn't pay, leading to re-arrest and jailing.

"Indeed, Defendants trap probationers in a pernicious cycle for years on end," Judge Kevin H. Sharp wrote.

The county and company deny the lawsuit's allegations, and are appealing. The company that owned PCC when the lawsuit was filed, Arizona-based Providence Service Corp., declined to answer questions. PCC's current owner, Molina Healthcare Inc., another publicly traded firm, also declined to comment. So did the county's attorney.

Since the lawsuit was filed "hundreds of people have reached out to us," says Alec Karakatsanis, co-founder of Equal Justice Under Law, a legal advocacy group that filed the suit with the Baker Donelson law firm. "The stories about how they're extorted and victimized are, to me, just really disturbing."

It's 23 degrees out, and downtown Murfreesboro's street lights are still on when Sherri Barker pulls up in front of the PCC probation office to drop off her son, Charlie. Wearing five shirts under his hoodie to fend off the cold, he claims a spot by the locked door—just as he does every Thursday.

"I've been on probation since I was 23 years old. I'm 35 now," he says, recounting eight arrests for driving on a suspended license and another for drug possession. Each brought more probation, fines and fees. Barker used to work construction to pay. But driving to work got him rearrested, he said.

Soon, seven others join him in line. One man, arrested for driving under the influence, has come to pay the $84 weekly fee for an electronic ankle bracelet. Another complains about company-run anger management classes that cost $17.45 each.

Barker says when his mother gets a tax refund, he plans to pay the last $500 he owes. But he wonders if he'll have to keep paying for drug tests or supervision fees until probation runs out in September.

"Just $500," he says. "But I don't know what they're going to try to pull. I wish you could just pay it off and be done with it."

Georgia is trying to overhaul its misdemeanor probation system, following a scathing state audit that found it was poorly run, lacked transparency and was abusive to some poor offenders.

Legislative reforms that took effect last summer include caps on the amount for-profit companies can charge probationers and a ban on jailing those who can prove they're unable to pay. Companies also are now required to disclose the number of offenders they supervise, and the fees and fines collected. The firms don't have to make public their profits and losses.

Prescott, whose association helped shape the Georgia reforms, says poor people should not be jailed solely because they can't pay fines and noted the new law allows for more alternatives, including community service.

But Long, the lawyer representing probationers, dismissed the reforms as "window-dressing."

Geraghty, of the Southern Center for Human Rights, says it's too soon to tell, labeling the reforms a first step.

"We still have a system in which there is a profit motive to keep people on probation and to keep them there for as long as possible," she said, "and that has not changed."

Tucked in one corner of the Rutherford County Jail's "C" block, cell 2 has a pair of steel sleeping platforms, a sink and toilet, and little else. For Rachael Hamm, jailed for her third violation of probation in two years, this is home until at least April.

"It's been a revolving door," says Hamm, who has run up $5,000 in probation fees since a 2012 arrest for possession of marijuana. "I've missed Thanksgiving. I've missed my baby's first Christmas...."

Hamm, who is 28 and has two of her children's names tattooed on the inside of her wrists, says her own mistakes got her here. She acknowledges abusing drugs. Her first violation was for failure to report to the probation officer. Then, when she and her boyfriend were pulled over, and police found marijuana and a container of urine that could be used to falsify a drug test, she went back to jail and probation was renewed again.

But Hamm says the court isn't helping her address her drug problem by piling on probation fees she has no way of paying.

The jail released 13 inmates in December, after a judge ordered the county to stop incarcerating people solely for not paying probation fees. But dozens are still being held, at a cost of $63 a day, for other probation violations.

The jail's records room holds 9,990 warrants for violating probation, the majority for non-payment. No doubt, many of those on probation could come up with the money. But what about those who can't?

Since the ruling, Fred Robinson worries less about being jailed again for not paying thousands of dollars in supervision fees. But more than four years after Robinson, 31, was arrested for possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia, he still can't escape probation.

Robinson endures recurrent internal bleeding and cirrhosis that forced him to give up a restaurant job. He says he told a probation officer that his $750 monthly disability check left nothing for court costs, fines and fees. But a judge renewed his probation and extended it.

"It's not about what I did," Robinson says. "It's about the money."

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW: Ford losing Focus on competition: Hatchback due for a redesign

By ROBERT DUFFER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

If the Ford Focus compact could talk, it would be the Jan Brady of the Ford bunch, complaining about all the attention and preference given to its big sister: crossover, crossover, crossover.

Though the Focus compact is one of the best-selling nameplates in the world behind the Toyota Corolla, Ford recently announced it will be adding four more crossovers to its global lineup by 2020, presumably including a subcompact crossover that will dwarf the Focus.

As the market shifts to crossovers, the compact hatch segment just got a lot more competitive for model year 2017, with the new Chevy Cruze hatch and the return of a Honda Civic hatch, both due in mid-2016.

Last redesigned for model year 2012 and significantly refreshed for 2015, the Focus needs an injection of newness to stay relevant in the shrinking compact hatch segment.

The arrival of the Ford Focus RS, the much-anticipated AWD hot hatch with the Mustang's EcoBoost engine, due on U.S. shores for the first time this spring, will provide excitement though not many sales.

For now, sales are left to the stale 2016 Focus. It retains its winning style, family of four roominess and balance of sporty handling with excellent fuel economy. But the $27,000 tag for the top-of-the-line Titanium trim is outpricing itself compared with the Mazda3, Volkswagen Golf, even the Toyota iM/Corolla hatch/whatever it will be called in the wake of Scion.

New for 2016 and on our test model was the Kona Blue tint coat, a striking color that looks like a metallic version of the blue oval itself. Also new was the 18-inch aluminum wheel package ($795) with all-season tires that helped provide grip to a front-wheel-drive hatch that really wants to squeeze in and out of corners.

The tester came with the proven four-cylinder engine paired to a pleasantly familiar six-speed automatic transmission. While the new EcoBoost is the fuel saver's engine of choice, the GDI engine balances peppy bursts of speed and exceptional cruising fuel economy (38 mpg highway). I averaged about 34 mpg combined. The Mazda3 is a bit better with its balance of punchiness and economy, but the Focus interior is quieter, and feels roomier than the Mazda.

MCT

The 2016 Ford Focus hatchback in top-of-the-line Titanium trim starts at $23,725 and gets 26 mpg city, 38 mpg highway with the 2-liter direct injection four-cylinder engine.

After weeks of CVTs and nine-speed or other fuel-optimizing transmissions, it was nice to have a reliable 6-speed that groaned when it needed to and shifted when I expected.

The engine was a little loud from the outside, but was muffled nicely on an inside that was swaddled in dark, soft-touch materials including leather seats, shifter and steering wheel. It's a far cry from the budget compacts that many learned to drive in.

Younger riders weren't as impressed.

"Ugh. This screen," said my 9-year-old passenger on first inspection. "I can tell already I'm not going to like it."

Though my tech savant was quick to judge, he was right.

An improvement over MyFord Touch, the Sync 3 system of in-car connectivity features steering wheel controls for easy access to audio functions, supplemented by a volume dial and tuning arrows on the center stack. A floating "source" button on the center stack, set off by itself, never became natural to us in the week we had the car. The system falters on navigation, no matter whether you pinch or swipe the screen. The narrow, 7-inch screen (an 8-inch screen is available) makes it difficult to execute commands such as route plotting, and the zoom buttons can become lost in the map display.

In general, the more you have to use the touch screen, the more distracting, dangerous and cumbersome the system. It's not just the reach, as the screen is high and deep in the center stack, but the same type of fiddling that makes your phone toxic while driving can be said of touch screens.

On the plus side, the voice commands returned good fidelity, recognizing commands from me as well as my more demanding, pint-sized passengers.

Ford has finally updated Sync 3 to include Apple CarPlay and Android Auto on all 2017 models. The 2016 Focus comes with two smart-charging USB ports, which charge at twice the rate of previous versions, according to Ford. We didn't notice.

The 9-year-old passenger did appreciate the green ambient lighting. His sister appreciated that we could fit her hockey locker and basketball gear in the excellent 23.3 cubic feet in the hatch, while still having room for four people, although larger adults will feel stuffed into the back seats. The 60/40 split seats meant she didn't have to ride with her hockey stick wedged from her feet to the roof.

Even though people prefer crossovers for a sense of higher (if not larger) space, there is still a place for the Jan Bradys. Crossovers may be more utilitarian, but hatchbacks are sportier and more fun. Ford should celebrate that distinction on the Focus' imminent redesign, and continue with the tech and safety upgrades.

NUTS & BOLTS

2016 Ford Focus Hatchback Titanium

- Vehicle type: compact hatch
- Base price: $23,725
- As tested: $26,775 (excluding $875 delivery)
- Mpg: 26 city, 38 highway
- Engine: 2-liter direct injection 4-cylinder
- Transmission: 6-speed automatic
- Parting shot: Even a well-equipped Focus shouldn't be more than $25,000.

MOTORING Q&A: Help needed with Kia's ignition key

By PAUL BRAND
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

Q: I own a 2008 Kia Optima with 38,000 miles. I frequently have trouble turning the ignition key. I have to vigorously jerk the steering wheel up and down, side to side until finally the key will turn. This may take from one to 10 minutes. This problem may occur several times in one week then not recur for several weeks. I've taken the car to the dealer four times. They make an effort to solve the problem but it always recurs. Do you have any ideas?

A: I searched the Internet and found that this is has been an issue for other Kia owners. Potential solutions range from lubricating the lock cylinder, which may be what the dealer has done, to holding the steering wheel in an "unloaded" position while turning the key, to using a mallet to hit the key while it is in the ignition.

First, try a different key. If you don't have a spare, have the dealer cut a new key based on the VIN number of the vehicle. Secondly, try turning the key with the steering wheel "unloaded," meaning it will move slightly in either direction and is not "leaning" against the interlock mechanism. Third, try lubricating the lock cylinder. Many techs suggest using only a dry lubricant like powdered graphite, but if one of the locking pins in the cylinder is sticking to dirt and debris, a light spray lube like Deep Creep might help.

If these steps don't work you could try the mallet trick, but if you do, start with very light taps on the key. And if all else fails, a new lock cylinder might be the answer.

Q: I drive a 2011 Toyota Camry that runs very fine. The only issue I have is a cold start noise. It lasts barely a second or so but it really bothers me. What suggestions do you for me?

A: You didn't describe the noise but the most common cold start noise is a light clatter from the valvetrain, which is not unusual nor harmful. If the noise is a deeper knocking sound it could indicate a main or rod bearing issue. In this case, until oil pressure rises there may be contact between bearing and journal.

But the most likely cause is a problem with the VVT (variable valve timing) gear. Toyota issued service bulletin in March 2013 that addresses this issue. Apparently the bolts that secure this gear to the camshaft can work loose, potentially stopping the engine. The repair requires replacing the VVT gear, which involves significant disassembly of the front of the engine. Toyota's new car powertrain warranty covers this repair for five years/60,000 miles.

Q: I have a 1991 Ford F-150 4x4 with automatic transmission. The "Rear anti-lock" warning light comes on for long periods, but also can be intermittent. I have replaced the ABS sensor located on top of the rear differential, with no success. I have been told that in this generation of ABS the sensor really has no function in how the brakes actually work and not to be concerned about the light coming on. What's your opinion?

A: The RABS (rear anti-lock brake system) on your 25-year-old truck was a very early version of ABS designed to prevent rear-wheel lockup under heavy braking, regardless of payload in the bed. With the key on and the ABS warning light still on, it is possible to display the exact fault code by momentarily grounding the RABS diagnostic connector under the dash and counting the number of short flashes (from one to 16) from the warning light. Potential faults range from the wheel speed sensor, which you've replaced, high or low circuit resistance, intermittent brake light switch function or problems with the RABS dump valve.

The RABS absolutely does influence how the brakes function, particularly when the bed is empty, so I would not ignore this light.

Life & Style

'10 Cloverfield Lane' opens well, but 'Zootopia' roars

AP

This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Mary Elizabeth Winstead, left, and John Goodman in a scene from the film, "10 Cloverfield Lane."

NEW YORK (AP)—Moviegoers didn't have much to go on with the mysterious "10 Cloverfield Lane," but the words "Cloverfield" and "J.J. Abrams" were enough.

The Abrams-produced monster movie, a so-called "spiritual successor" to 2008's found-footage hit "Cloverfield," opened with a better-than-expected $25.2 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. That was good enough for second place to the Disney animated hit "Zootopia," which stayed on top with $50 million in its second week, a slide of only 33 percent from its opening weekend.

The weekend's biggest disappointment was Sacha Baron Cohen's "Brothers Grimsby," which flopped with a mere $3.2 million. It's a career low box-office debut for the shape-shifting British comedian by a wide margin.

Perhaps sensing trouble, Sony Pictures had postponed the release date of the R-rated comedy numerous times. Whereas Cohen's most popular characters—Borat and Ali G—were deployed largely to satirize America, moviegoers showed less enthusiasm for the British parody of "Brothers Grimsby," a poorly reviewed R-rated, U.K.-set spy comedy.

With the multiplexes stuffed with R-rated offerings ("Deadpool," ''London Has Fallen," ''Whiskey Tango Foxtrot"), the acclaimed "Zootopia" has had family audiences all to itself. The film, which imagines a metropolis inhabited by animals, will have little competition before "The Jungle Book" arrives in mid-April.

Taking in $83.1 million internationally over the weekend, "Zootopia" has already made more than $430 million globally.

"With the marketplace loaded with R-rated fare, if you're a family with kids, the only game in town right now is 'Zootopia,'" said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore. "That film is reaping the benefits of studios somehow not realizing: 'Hey, there's a big void in this marketplace.'"

The directorial debut of Dan Trachtenberg, "10 Cloverfield Lane," arrived with the opposite kind of hoopla that preceded Abrams' previous film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens." The release of "10 Cloverfield Lane," made for just about $13 million, wasn't much advertised until an ominous Super Bowl spot.

Megan Colligan, head of distribution and marketing for Paramount Pictures, said the sly, cryptic campaign got people talking about a movie that revealed little except its two stars (John Goodman, Mary Elizabeth Winstead) in a bunker.

"From a marketing level, it's a challenge when a movie takes place in a relatively enclosed space and you're promising but not showing a bigger final act," Colligan said. "But I think part of the excitement and mystery around the 'Cloverfield' name led to the promise that something exciting was going to happen, and the trust in J.J. as a brand that he delivers."

Making little impact in their debuts were Lionsgate's romantic comedy "The Perfect Match" ($4.2 million) and Focus Features' Christian tale "The Young Messiah" ($3.4 million).

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"Zootopia,"** $50 million ($83.1 million international).
2. **"10 Cloverfield Lane,"** $25.2 million ($1.5 million international).
3. **"Deadpool,"** $10.8 million ($11.3 million international).
4. **"London Has Fallen,"** $10.7 million ($12 million international).
5. **"Whiskey Tango Foxtrot,"** $4.6 million.
6. **"The Perfect Match,"** $4.2 million.
7. **"The Young Messiah,"** $3.4 million.
8. **"The Brothers Grimsby,"** $3.2 million ($3.2 million international).
9. **"Gods of Egypt,"** $2.5 million ($26.4 million international).
10. **"Risen,"** $2.3 million.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada), according to comScore:

1. **"Zootopia,"** $83.1 million.
2. **"Kung Fu Panda 3,"** $28.6 million.
3. **"The Divergent Series: Allegiant,"** $26.7 million.
4. **"Gods of Egypt,"** $26.4 million.
5. **"Ip Man 3,"** $13 million.
6. **"London Has Fallen,"** $12 million.
7. **"Deadpool,"** $11.3 million.
8. **"The Revenant,"** $6.9 million.
9. **"Hail, Caesar!"** $3.8 million.
10. **"The Brothers Grimsby,"** $3.2 million.

Ben Bagdikian mourned as 'a major figure' US journalism

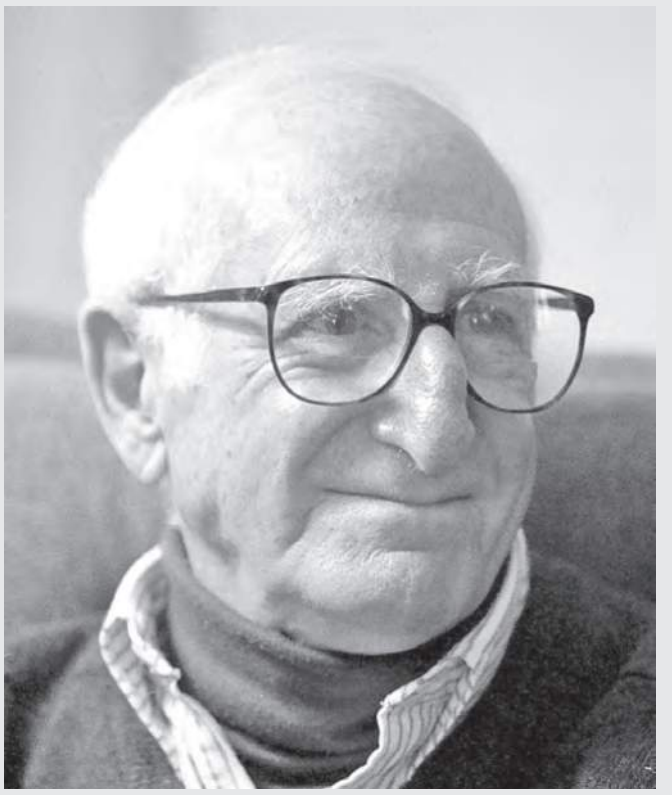
NEW YORK (AP)—Tributes and remembrances for Ben H. Bagdikian came flooding in Saturday following the death of the renowned reporter and media critic who was a passionate voice for journalistic integrity.

"Ben was a major figure in 20th century U.S. journalism and journalism education, and we're all his beneficiaries," wrote Dean Edward Wasserman of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley.

Bagdikian, who helped publish the Pentagon Papers and wrote the groundbreaking book "The Media Monopoly," died Friday morning at his home in Berkeley, California, said his wife, Marlene Griffith Bagdikian.

Facebook was filled with former colleagues and students mourning the loss, including Todd Gitlin, a professor of journalism and sociology at Columbia University, who had this comment: "Ben was a wonderful man. All of us who loved him have to step up our decency now."

Bagdikian's five-decade career in journalism included covering the civil rights struggle in America and riding with an Israeli tank crew during the Suez crisis.



AP

Tributes and remembrances for Ben H. Bagdikian came flooding in Saturday, March, 12, 2016, following the death of the renowned reporter and media critic who was a passionate voice for journalistic integrity.

In 1953, he and other reporters on the Providence Journal in Rhode Island shared a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of a bank robbery and police chase. He also held a Peabody Award for broadcast commentary.

In the 1970s, while serving as ombudsman for the Washington Post, he posed as a convicted murderer to get inside a Pennsylvania maximum-security prison for articles about problems and abuses in the prison system.

Bagdikian once said he had spent most of his career "exposing the neglected suffering of others."

In the 1970s, he obtained the Pentagon Papers—a secret history of U.S. strategy and involvement in Vietnam—for the Washington Post from leaker Daniel Ellsberg. Published revelations in the Post and the New York Times helped bolster opposition to the Vietnam War.

"When you were confronted by a publisher who was scared, or had turned hostile, or a powerful institution that wanted to squash you, Ben would volunteer without hesitation to stand shoulder to shoulder with you. His example lives on," wrote UC Berkeley professor Lowell Bergman.

In 1976 Bagdikian joined the journalism faculty at the UC Berkeley. He later became dean of the graduate school of journalism, retiring in 1990.

Bagdikian perhaps was best-known for his media commentary and criticism. In 1983, he published "The Media Monopoly," which criticized the impact on journalism of mergers that were consolidating broadcast outlets and newspapers in the hands of giant corporations.

Actress : I only wanted to document Mexican drug lord's life

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Actress Kate del Castillo says in an article published Sunday that she only met secretly with Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman for a project to document his life in a movie, and denied suggestions she had received any money from the drug lord.

Del Castillo wrote of the meeting in a first-person article published in the Mexican weekly newsmagazine Proceso. She explained how she was contacted by the capo's attorneys, the discussions leading up to the encounter and ultimately her October 2015 meeting with Guzman and American actor Sean Penn in a remote area of northeastern Mexico.

AP

In this Aug. 15, 2014 file photo, actress Kate Del Castillo speaks during a news conference in City Council chambers in Los Angeles.

The Proceso article comes just two days after The New Yorker magazine published part of an interview with the actress. It was the first she had given to any medium about the meeting with the drug lord.

"What I wanted to do was document the life of a man named enemy number one by the most powerful nation in the world," she wrote.

Guzman, known as the leader of the Sinaloa cartel, was captured on Jan. 8 after a nearly six-month manhunt following his escape last July from a maximum security prison through a tunnel built under his cell. It was his second such escape from a penitentiary.

The actress wrote that the capo's attorneys contacted her via email in 2014 and later met with her. The lawyers said that "El Chapo" wanted to give her the rights to tell his story in a movie, one that she would also appear in.

"Why me?" the actress recalled asking.

"Because he admires you, respects you, and fully trusts you," she said one of the lawyers told her.

Del Castillo told of the trip she made Oct. 2 with Penn and two producers to meet with Guzman. One of the capo's sons met the group at a hotel and then took them on a journey by land, air, and land again.

Mexican authorities have said they were investigating whether Guzman gave money to Del Castillo's tequila company. Officials here have also sought to interrogate the actress, although they have said they consider her a witness not a suspect.

In a second article published in Process on Sunday, Del Castillo denied that the capo had given money to her to make the movie, or to her company.

"I have never received money from Mr. Guzman," she said.

'Star Wars' wins, John Stamos slimed at Kids' Choice Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Will Ferrell, Adele and Jennifer Lawrence won at Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards, while John Stamos and favorite music group winner Fifth Harmony were among those doused with the show's trademark green slime.

"Star Wars: The Force Awakens" won best film at the awards, hosted by Blake Shelton on Saturday at the Forum in Inglewood, California. Ferrell won favorite movie actor for "Daddy's Home," and Lawrence won favorite movie actress for the final "Hunger Games" installment.

Chewbacca, left, and BB-8 accept the award for favorite movie for "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" at the Kids' Choice Awards at The Forum on Saturday, March 12, 2016, in Inglewood, Calif.

AP

Sofia Vergara and Justin Bieber also won awards.

But the slimings are often the biggest events of the Kids' Choice Awards. Jason Sudeikis and Josh Gad were victims this year, as was Shelton. "Henry Danger" star Jace Norman poured a bucket of slime on Stamos, and Fifth Harmony were drenched after accepting their award.

Lawyer: 'Pawn Stars' star to fight felony drug, gun charges

LAS VEGAS (AP)—The lawyer representing "Pawn Stars" reality TV star "Chumlee" says he'll fight felony weapon and drug charges—and sex assault allegations if they're filed.

AP

In this May 5, 2010 file photo, Chumlee of the reality cable TV show "Pawn Stars," whose given name is Austin Lee Russell, arrives at A&E Television Network's Upfront in New York.

Defense attorney David Chesnoff told The Associated Press on Thursday that he's "looking forward to the truthful conclusion" of the case against Austin Lee Russell.

Russell posted $62,000 bail and was released from jail pending a May 23 court date.

Russell was arrested Wednesday after police say officers serving a search warrant in a sexual assault investigation found methamphetamine, marijuana and a gun at his southwest Las Vegas home.

The 33-year-old was booked on 19 drug-possession charges and one weapon charge.

Russell wasn't booked on a sex-crime allegation. Police said that investigation stems from a recent complaint by a woman, and is continuing.

Historian claims he has solved Italy's literary mystery

ROME (AP)—An Italian historian claims he has solved of one of Italy's biggest literary mysteries: the true identity of author Elena Ferrante.

Ferrante's four Neapolitan novels have won worldwide acclaim, despite the pseudonym. The final title "The Story of The Lost Child" is a finalist for the 2016 Man Booker International Prize.

Italian writer and Dante expert Marco Santagata said in Corriere della Sera's literary insert Sunday that after a careful study of the texts, he ascertained that Ferrante is really Marcella Marmo, a Neapolitan professor who studied in Pisa.

Marmo, however, denied it.

"I thank all those who thought I was a happy best-seller writer, but as I tried to say in recent days, I am not Elena Ferrante," Marmo said in a statement carried by the ANSA news agency.

Mom taking step into dating is tripped up by daughter

DEAR ABBY: I'm a single mom in my 40s and my daughter is 12. After my last relationship, 10 years ago (not with her father), I took a leave of absence from the dating world to concentrate on myself and being the best mother I could.

Fast-forward: When I attempt to talk to anyone of the opposite sex, my daughter has a fit. She has hidden my car keys and my phone, pouts if I go out and behaves like an all-out brat.

I have reassured her that I love her and always will. Also, I would never allow someone around her if I had any suspicion that he might not be good for her. Nothing works. I have spoken with only one person I would even think of introducing her to, but I am afraid of her attitude.

Abby, what's the best way to enter into the dating world without hurting my child? I want to date, but my child won't let me.

ENTERING THE DATING WORLD AGAIN

DEAR ENTERING: Your daughter likes things just the way they are and views any disruption as a threat to her lifestyle. The best way to enter into the dating world would be to do it without consulting her. IF and when you meet someone and things become serious, introduce them then—in a casual way. If she acts up, remember that YOU are the parent.

Your daughter doesn't have to "love" someone because you do. She does, however, have to treat that person with the same respect with which you treat her friends—and you should insist upon it. You are the parent, and it's up to you to enforce the rules for as long as she lives with you.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My girlfriend and I are getting ready to move to a new city in six months (each of us for our own careers) and plan to move in together. Some issues still need to be ironed out before we make that commitment, and my biggest concern is the anger and resentment she carries toward her semi-estranged father.

I understand where it comes from and why, but it worries me to see how quickly and completely it can overwhelm her personality. I lack comparable experience, so I struggle to have constructive conversations with her about it. But I can't accept this poisonous volatility as a feature of our life together. I believe that speaking to someone would help her deal with these feelings in a healthier, more constructive way, but she rejects that idea.

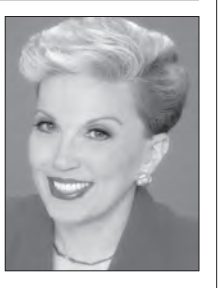
I don't want to bully her into counseling, but I feel like I have to do something before we take this next step, for both our sakes. Would it be wrong to tell her she has to start seeing someone before I commit to moving in together?

HESITATING IN FLORIDA

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR HESITATING: No, it would not be wrong. If your girlfriend's problems with her father bleed over into her relationship with you—and it appears they have—it would be a mistake for you to move in together because it won't last.

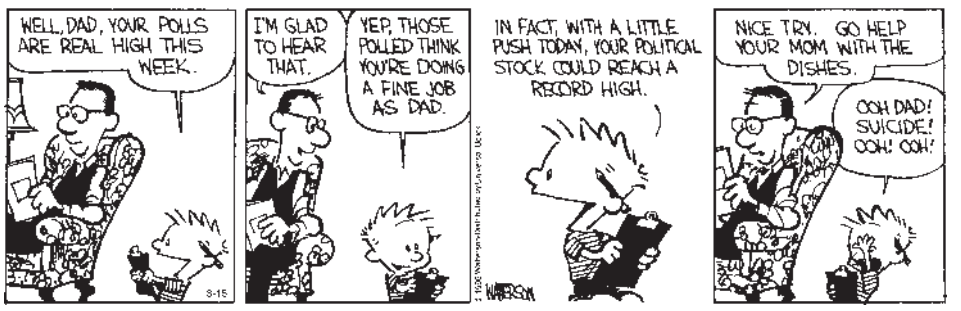
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

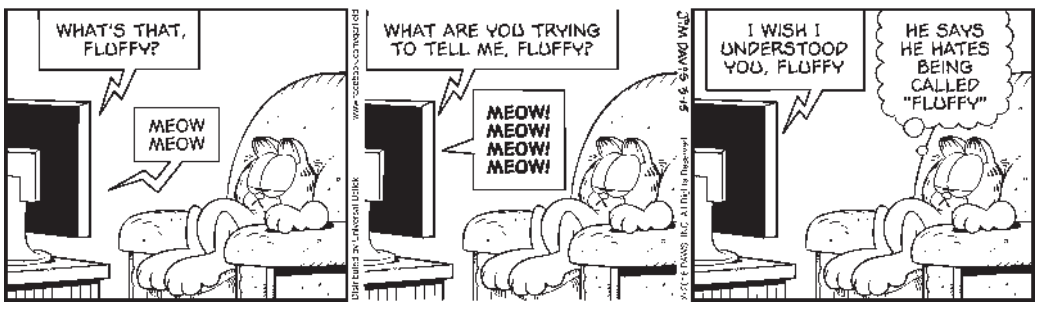
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WELL, DAD, YOUR POLLS ARE REAL HIGH THIS WEEK.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.
YEP, THOSE POLLED THINK YOU'RE DOING A FINE JOB AS DAD.
IN FACT, WITH A LITTLE PUSH TODAY, YOUR POLITICAL STOCK COULD REACH A RECORD HIGH.
NICE TRY. GO HELP YOUR MOM WITH THE DISHES.
OOH DAD! SUICIDE! OOH! OOH!
WATTERSON

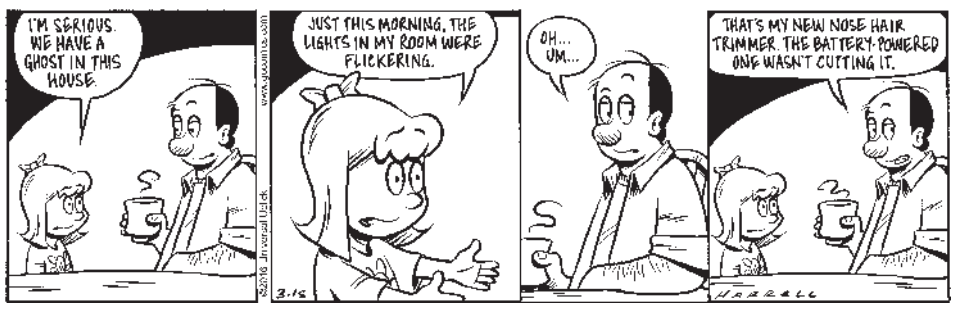
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


WHAT'S THAT, FLUFFY?
MEOW MEOW
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME, FLUFFY?
MEOW! MEOW! MEOW! MEOW!
I WISH I UNDERSTOOD YOU, FLUFFY
HE SAYS HE HATES BEING CALLED "FLUFFY"

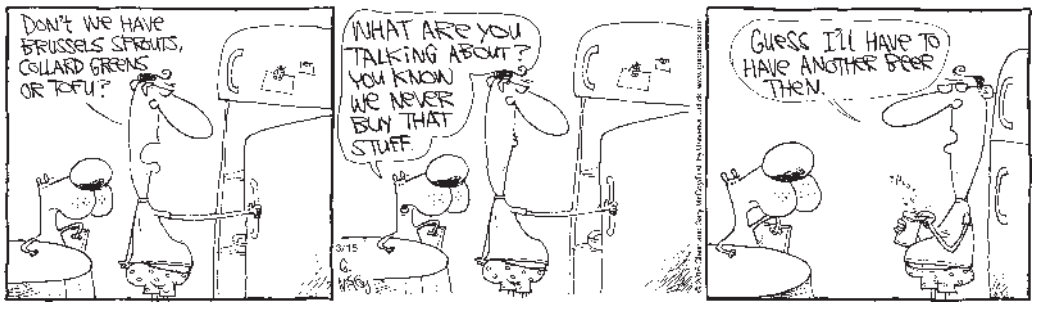
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I'M SERIOUS. WE HAVE A GHOST IN THIS HOUSE.
JUST THIS MORNING, THE LIGHTS IN MY ROOM WERE FLICKERING.
OH... UM...
THAT'S MY NEW NOSE HAIR TRIMMER. THE BATTERY-POWERED ONE WASN'T CUTTING IT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


DON'T WE HAVE BRUSSELS SPROUTS, COLLARD GREENS OR TOFU?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU KNOW WE NEVER BUY THAT STUFF.
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO HAVE ANOTHER BEER THEN.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Whip
5 Pair with an air
8 Squad
12 Mine, in Marseille
13 Wall St. wheeler-dealer
14 The Big Easy acronym
15 Rain storage tanks
17 Go to sea
18 Convened
19 Nail polish
21 Tower of confusion
24 "Dream on!"
25 Wreck
26 "Desperate Housewives" lane
30 Altar promise
31 Apple centers
32 And so on (Abbr.)
33 TV's talking horse
35 "Candy is dandy" poet
36 Probability
37 16-Down that bites
38 Drag
41 Opinion (Abbr.)
42 A Great Lake
43 "Now hear this!"
48 Peel
49 MGM motto start
50 Prime-time hour
51 Regarding
52 However
53 Shortly

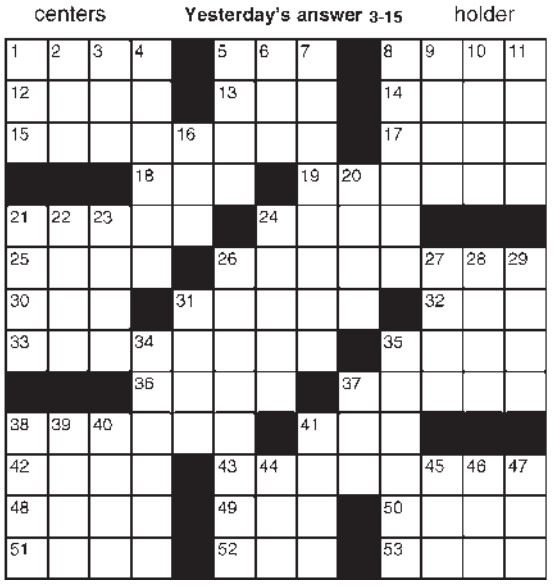
DOWN

1 Varnish ingredient
2 "— Blue?"
3 "Mayday!"
4 Hired guns
5 Scurry
6 Coffee vessel
7 Fanatical
8 Risky
9 Linguist Chomsky
10 Netman Nastase
11 Towering
16 Slithery fish
20 Little lice
21 Edge
22 BMW rival
23 Résumés
24 Buenos —
26 Puns and such
27 Caboose
28 "— deal!"
29 Needing liniment
31 Give up
34 Ohio city
35 Multi-day prayer
37 Witticism
38 Antitoxins
39 NFL analyst Collinsworth
40 Intimate
41 "Hey!"
44 Rage
45 Diarist Anais
46 Dos preceder
47 Stock holder

Solution time: 22 mins.

A	M	P		S	H	E	B	A		P	R	O
B	O	A		P	A	I	F	S		F	F	I
C	O	N	V	I	V	I	A	I		R	B	I
				R	A		K	C	R	E	A	N
S	A	M	P	A	N		S	P	U	N		
E	P	A		L	A	W		E	N	N	U	I
A	I	R	S		S	H	E		G	I	R	D
R	E	S	E	E		O	N	S		A	D	O
		U	L	N	A		S	T	Y	L	U	S
N	E	P	A	L	I		N	A	E			
A	M	I		I	M	P	A	R	T	I	A	L
G	M	A		S	T	O	R	E		R	U	E
S	A	I		T	O	T	F	S		F	G	G

Yesterday's answer 3-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kellan Lutz, 31; Eva Amurri Martino, 31; Eva Longoria, 41; Bret Michaels, 53.

Happy Birthday: Look at all sides of a situation before you make a personal or professional move. Change is needed, but your motives must be right and your strategy securely in place before you proceed. If you hide from the truth or neglect to share your feelings, you should limit what you can accomplish. Precision, detail and honesty will come first. Your numbers are 5, 17, 22, 26, 30, 37, 45.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Live in the moment, but be reflective about what transpires around you. A nonjudgmental attitude will give you greater insight into yourself as well as those around you. Make a commitment to be objective and positive. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Share your thoughts, feelings and intentions, and you will be met with interesting responses that will help you find the best solutions. Enlist the help of those who have the skills you need to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A contemplative attitude will be in your best interest. Watch and you will be able to determine what's required of you in order to avoid any misunderstandings. Stay in control by being informed so that you can make a practical decision. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Embrace the unknown, and you will expand your mind and your interests. Share your thoughts with someone who comes from a different background or educational position, and you will obtain valuable information. Love and romance are featured. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You need a little excitement in your life. Try something new or engage in a situation that challenges you mentally and physically, and you will come out the victor. Travel, learning and delving into alternative lifestyles are favored. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't leave anything to chance. Detail and precision will be important if you don't want to suffer a loss. Keep your emotions in check and avoid a dispute with anyone who is acting unreasonably. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Get involved. Being an onlooker will not help you advance. Change your routine or find a way to stand out and be noticed. Don't be afraid to speak your mind or bring about the changes that will open up controversial discussions. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take charge and plan to get a lot done. Delve into projects that excite you and spend time with people you find inspiring. Romance should be high on your list as a motivation to explore different options and lifestyles. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You will be questioned if you aren't detailed and precise. An explicit account of a situation that has the potential to disrupt your life should be dealt with head-on if you expect to come out on top. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take the road less traveled and you will find something that will change your life. A philosophical discovery will help you move in a direction that will ease your stress and satisfy your spiritual, physical and emotional needs. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Use ingenuity and muscle and you will get what you want. It's up to you to take action and make things happen. Express your feelings, but be willing to compromise. A promise someone makes will be honored. Pitch in and help. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Keep the peace if you want to get anything done today. Don't give in to trivial annoyances or waste time with others' complaints. Do your own thing and steer clear of any interference or arguments. Focus on love and personal perfection. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are proactive, innovative and engaging. You are perceptive, sensitive and persuasive.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			2		4			
		2		8		6		
9	5						7	8
4				5				6
	2		3		6		9	
1				9				3
3	6						4	5
		8		3		1		
			9		1			

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	9	5	6	7	8	2	3	4
7	6	3	4	2	1	9	5	8
4	8	2	3	5	9	1	6	7
2	4	9	5	6	3	7	8	1
5	1	6	2	8	7	3	4	9
3	7	8	1	9	4	6	2	5
8	3	4	7	1	6	5	9	2
9	2	7	8	3	5	4	1	6
6	5	1	9	4	2	8	7	3

Difficulty Level ★ 3/14

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MOCHA CAKE Solution: 5 letters

B	I	R	T	H	D	A	Y	F	F	U	L	F	F	C
N	O	O	P	S	A	E	T	T	A	L	I	R	R	H
O	S	M	B	O	K	S	I	H	W	L	U	E	O	O
F	D	I	S	A	V	A	J	G	L	I	A	N	S	C
F	L	X	O	G	K	E	L	I	T	M	R	C	T	O
I	O	R	U	N	R	I	N	L	C	T	O	H	I	L
H	M	E	R	I	A	G	N	H	I	F	L	B	N	A
C	I	T	C	T	G	R	E	G	F	N	L	A	G	T
I	L	T	R	P	U	E	U	E	S	E	A	R	S	E
R	K	U	E	M	S	E	E	O	N	O	A	V	R	P
T	S	B	A	E	S	Ⓞ	B	D	L	N	D	E	C	I
A	S	E	M	T	W	O	Ⓘ	O	U	F	T	A	C	C
E	S	P	R	E	S	S	O	Ⓛ	W	T	A	S	T	E
B	A	O	U	V	S	R	E	Y	A	L	O	O	C	R
N	E	K	A	C	E	S	A	B	A	K	E	G	G	S

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Bake, Baking Soda, Batter, Beat, Birthday, Blend, Bowl, Butter, Cake, Chiffon, Chocolate, Coffee, Cool, Cream Cheese, Cups, Eggs, Espresso, Filling, Flour, Fluffy, French, Frosting, Fruit, Granules, Guest, Java, Latte, Layers, Light, Milk, Mix, Molds, Oil, Oven, Pan, Recipe, Rich, Roll, Salt, Serve, Sour Cream, Sugar, Sweet, Taste, Teaspoon, Tempting, Vanilla, Whisk

Yesterday's Answer: Dissenting

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45 or 46,** order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contains 43 puzzles.)

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Calderon's buzzer-beating 3 lifts Knicks past Lakers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It was a busted play that led to the winning shot for the New York Knicks, and Jose Calderon turned out to be the right guy in the right spot.

The 10-year veteran point guard hit a 3-pointer with two-tenths of a second left after Carmelo Anthony wasn't able to get open, and the Knicks pulled out a 90-87 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday night.

"It was kind of a weird situation," Calderon said after his only 3 of the game. "The play was supposed to go to Melo, but he couldn't get free. I grabbed the ball and there weren't too many options out there, so I kind of got open for a minute and that was it. Sometimes when you're struggling a little bit, you make that important one."

Anthony scored 12 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter for New York. He shot 10 for 20 and had 12 rebounds.

"I wanted this one," Anthony said. "Going back and forth just made it that much better. I'm pretty sure we gave the fans what they paid to see out there tonight. The way this game played itself out, we didn't want it to come down to the wire, but it was one of those games that was for the ages."

Kobe Bryant had 14 points in his 29th and final head-to-head matchup in the regular season with Anthony. The Lakers had a combined 16-13 record in those games against the Knicks and Denver Nuggets.

"It was a very emotional situation, from the standpoint of competing against one of the greats, a friend and brother, for the last time," Anthony said. "This isn't just a basketball relationship. I mean, basketball brought us together, but this goes way beyond the court and we've taken it to another level."

The first time Anthony played against Bryant was Dec. 19, 2003, when Anthony had 24 points and Bryant 13 off the bench in the Lakers' 101-99 win over Denver. Their friendship blossomed when they were teammates on two gold medal-winning Olympic teams in in London and Beijing.

"We had so many battles throughout the years," Bryant said. "It's always strange, thinking it's the last time, but it's been fun."

The Knicks led by as many as 16 early in the third quarter before the Lakers cut it to 65-60 entering the fourth and pulled ahead 77-76 on a 3-pointer by Lou Williams with 4:50 to play.

Bryant reported back in with 3:32 remaining and the Lakers ahead by three. He hit a 9-foot turnaround jumper for an 81-76 lead, but Anthony drained a 3-pointer and a 21-footer to put the Knicks up 86-85 with 54.8 seconds to go.

Bryant's most productive game against New York was on Feb. 2, 2009, when he scored 61 points in a 126-117 victory -- a Madison Square Garden record that stood until Anthony eclipsed it with 62 on Jan. 24, 2014, against Charlotte.

"He's an assassin, man. You can't take no plays off, going against him," Anthony said. "Even now, you're seeing flashes of him out there. He still has that look in his eyes when he gets the ball, and you have to play close attention to him. So we're definitely going to miss that."

AP

New York Knicks guard Jose Calderon, center, of Spain, looks to pass between Los Angeles Lakers center Roy Hibbert (17) and guard Marcelo Huertas, right, of Brazil,during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Sunday, March 13, 2016.

Cavaliers 114, Clippers 90

In Los Angeles, LeBron James scored 27 points and the Cleveland Cavaliers buried the Los Angeles Clippers with 3-pointers in a 114-90 victory Sunday, tying their season high with 18 from long range.

J.R. Smith and Kyrie Irving added 17 points each, and Channing Frye had 15 on a season-high-tying five 3-pointers for the Eastern Conference leaders.

The Cavaliers won their third straight and improved to 7-2 against the Clippers at Staples Center since the 2006-07 season. Cleveland is 20-6 against the West, including 10-4 on the road.

J.J. Redick scored 19 points, and Chris Paul added 17 points and 10 assists for the Clippers. They outscored the Cavs 17-7 to start the game, but James tied it on a 3-pointer, and Tristan Thompson's hook gave the Cavs the lead for good by the end of the quarter.

"They moved the ball well, they defended, they stopped us, they got out in transition and we let them be too comfortable," Paul said.

Kevin Love, who finished with 12 points and nine rebounds after sitting out the previous game with a left knee sprain, launched the Cavs on a 30-6 run over the end of the first and start of the second quarter that pushed their lead to 37-23. Frye had three of his 3s in that stretch.

"We have a thing now where if you have any airspace and that shot is there, you are taking it," Love said.

The Clippers closed to 43-38 with a 15-6 spurt, helped by 3-pointers from Jamal Crawford and two in a row from Paul. But that was their last run of the game.

Bucks 109, Nets 100

In New York, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 28 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds, nearly getting his fourth triple-double in the last 11 games by halftime, and Milwaukee beat Brooklyn.

Antetokounmpo already had 12 points, nine assists and eight rebounds by the half on his way to becoming the first Bucks player with four triple-doubles in a season. All of them have come since Feb. 22.

Jabari Parker added 23 points, and Khris Middleton had 19 points to help the Bucks win their third straight game. Brook Lopez scored 20 points for the Nets.

Hawks 104, Pacers 75

In Atlanta, Al Horford and Paul Millsap each scored 18 points, Kyle Korver added 14 and Atlanta used a blistering third quarter to rout Indiana.

The Hawks went on a 20-0 run and finished the third period with seven 3s, the last coming by reserve forward Kris Humphries to make it a 34-point lead. Atlanta has won five of its last six.

Indiana rookie Myles Turner, who scored a team-high 19 points, was the only starter for either team to play in the fourth. All-Star starting forward Paul George finished with just seven points for the Pacers, almost 19 below his team-leading average, on 3-for-15 shooting.

Jazz 108, Kings 99

In Sacramento, Derrick Favors had 28 points and 14 rebounds and Gordon Hayward scored 27 points in Utah's victory over Sacramento.

The Jazz won their second straight game by setting the tone early, coming out with energy against the lethargic Kings and leading by 18 points after one quarter. The lead remained in double figures for much of the game before the Kings made it somewhat close in the fourth.

DeMarcus Cousins had 31 points and 10 rebounds for Sacramento in his return from being suspended for one game by the team. Cousins was disciplined following a tirade directed at coach George Karl Thursday night during and after a loss to Cleveland.

Russia whistleblowers talk to anti-doping group

SWITZERLAND (AP)—The whistleblower in the Russian doping scandal has the support of anti-doping leaders in her quest to compete at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics this summer.

Yulia Stepanova and her husband, Vitaly, spoke Sunday to more than 130 anti-doping leaders during a rare public appearance. They detailed their role in uncovering the scandal, and Yulia re-emphasized her desire to compete in the Olympics.

"Our members let her know that whatever we can do to help her achieve that, we think it would be appropriate," said Joseph de Pencier, the CEO of the Institute of National Anti-Doping Organizations.

The Stepanovs spoke via Skype to the gathering of iNADO leaders in Lausanne, Switzerland. The family has been living in hiding since making the allegations that led to last year's suspension of the Russian track program. Last week, the leader of track's international federation (IAAF), Sebastian Coe, said Russia still has "significant work" to do to be reinstated in time for Rio.

Stepanova could presumably compete in Rio even if Russia isn't declared eligible. Recently, the 800-meter runner applied to IAAF to compete in Rio "in capacity other than as a Russian athlete." The IAAF is considering the request.

During their presentation to iNADO, the Stepanovs said they've felt the support from different factions in sports but would also like to see more action - including assurances the Russian track team will not compete in Rio, de Pencier said. He said the husband and wife also spoke about their frustrations in getting someone to listen when they first presented the evidence.

David Kenworthy, the outgoing chairman of iNADO, said the biggest takeaway from the presentation was "just the immensity of what they've done."

"They've turned their lives upside down," Kenworthy said. "Life will never be the same for them."

Last week, the man who led an independent investigation into the Russian track team, Dick Pound, said time is running out for Russia's reinstatement.

"I can't tell for sure whether they are taking this really seriously or they assume the problem will go away," Pound told The Associated Press.

In November, iNADO called for the Russian track team to be banned from the Olympics. De Pencier said Stepanova's presentation only reinforced that stance.

"We're skeptical that Russians can adopt the systemic-cultural change they need to show people their athletes are clean," he said. "Since November, there hasn't been a whole lot of testing and education in Russia. That doesn't increase confidence that they can pull it together in a way that would make athletes around the world feel comfortable about lining up against Russian athletes."

Bayern vs Juventus in Champions League; Barca confident

AP

FC Barcelona's Neymar, left, goes for a header against Getafe's Emi Buendia, second right, during a Spanish La Liga soccer match at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain, Saturday, March 12, 2016.

BERLIN (AP)—The last four Champions League quarterfinal spots are up for grabs this week with Barcelona and Manchester City both well-placed, while a European heavyweight will head for the exit after Bayern Munich plays Juventus.

Five-time champion Bayern was looking certain to advance from the Round of 16 with a two-goal lead during the first leg in Turin, only for late goals from Paulo Dybala and Stefano Sturaro to earn Juventus a 2-2 draw and revive the Italian league leader's hopes for Wednesday's second leg in Munich.

Spanish league leader Barcelona holds a 2-0 lead over Arsenal, which needs to get over the disappointment of Sunday's FA Cup exit to Watford, the 2-1 defeat at home ending its bid to win the trophy for a third straight year.

Barcelona hasn't lost in a total of 37 games straight across all competitions, a Spanish record, and can count on home support on Wednesday.

Manchester City is in a similarly comfortable position ahead after beating Dynamo Kiev 3-1 away in their last-16 first leg, while Atletico Madrid and PSV Eindhoven are scoreless ahead of Tuesday's other game.

Bayern hopes to finish the job at home after conceding late goals to Juventus and allowing the two-time champion back in the tie.

Bayern has won its last three games at home against Italian sides, and has looked unstoppable this season in Munich, winning its three group games against Dinamo Zagreb, Arsenal and Olympiakos by an aggregate score of 14-1.

Pep Guardiola's side warmed up for Juve's visit with a 5-0 win over Werder Bremen on Saturday, when Arjen Robben had a rest and Mario Goetze made his comeback after five months out with a thigh injury.

"I believe we showed today that we're in quite good form," Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said. "I'd say we're looking with optimism at Wednesday."

Juve defeated Sassuolo 1-0 at home on Friday, the side's 10th consecutive league game without conceding.

Barcelona is bidding for its 10th straight win at home in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Even a draw at the Camp Nou, where it hasn't lost in more than a year, will be enough to keep the Catalan club on track to become the first side to defend the Champions League since the old European Cup was given a shake-up in 1992-93.

"It won't be an easy game at all," said Belgian defender Thomas Vermaelen, a former Arsenal player. "Although we have a small lead, you can never say that they are out. They have very quick players and that makes them dangerous. We'll need to concentrate."

Barcelona's last home defeat was against Malaga in February 2015.

Manchester City is on the brink of qualifying for the Champions League quarterfinals for the first time, in a season when its domestic form is starting to go off the rails.

Nine points off the lead in the Premier League, it appears the rest of this season boils down to success in the Champions League.

City produced one of its best displays of the season to beat Dynamo 3-1 in the first leg, making the English team a heavy favorite to advance -- especially since Dynamo has never won in England.

The last time Dynamo reached the quarterfinals was in 1999, when Sergei Rebrov -- the team's current coach—was leading its attack.

Atletico is bidding to reach the quarterfinals for the third straight season and is coming off a scoring streak of nine goals in its last three games. It has won four in a row in the Spanish league.

PSV captain Luuk de Jong returns from his one-match suspension and hopes to lead the team to its first victory in Spain in 13 games. Following the scoreless first leg in Eindhoven, however, a score draw also would be enough to send PSV through.

Recent history is against Phillip Cocu's team. PSV failed to win any of its three away matches so far this Champions League campaign, losing at CSKA Moscow and Wolfsburg and securing a goalless draw at Manchester United.

Tuesday's game comes days before what is likely to be the decisive match in the Dutch Eredivisie next weekend, between PSV and Ajax.

"We have shown in the past we can play well in big matches," De Jong said. "We have to do it again in these two games."

Schwartzel rallies and beats Haas in playoff

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—Coming up on five years since winning the Masters, Charl Schwartzel was starting to wonder if he would ever win again on American soil.

He didn't have much reason to think that would change Sunday at the Valspar Championship.

Schwartzel was five shots behind going into the final round on an Innisbrook course that was tougher than ever, and still three shots behind as he approached the toughest part of the Copperhead course.

What followed were extraordinary shots, and a playoff victory over Bill Haas.

All it took was a 65-foot birdie across the green on the 13th. He got up-and-down for birdie from a tough lie in the bunker. His go-for-broke pitch from a dicey lie on the edge of the bunker on the 16th hole allowed him to save par. And he made a 25-foot birdie putt he couldn't afford to miss on the 17th.

Schwartzel closed with a 4-under 67 - the best score Sunday - and won on the first extra hole when Haas made bogey from a bunker.

"I just needed to get over the hurdle of winning out here again," Schwartzel said. "And I think the way today played out with it being really difficult, you're grinding just to make pars and keep the ball in play. I just needed to put it together on the weekend when it counted."

He won for the third time in his last six events dating to December (the other two were in South Africa)

Haas had a two-shot lead with three holes to play, and he was torn between whether he let one get away or whether the South African simply won it. Schwartzel and Georgia senior Lee McCoy (69) were the only two players from the final nine groups to break par.

"Charl had the mentality of needing to shoot a good score, and he did, and that was a hard thing to do," Haas said. "I had the mentality, 'If I shoot even par, I win.' Pars were kind of good. ... I won't beat myself up too bad. I've got to give Charl credit."

The difference was Schwartzel making two long birdies, and Haas making bogey on the toughest hole at Innisbrook on No. 16. In the playoff, Haas hit into the trees, came up short into a bunker, and blasted out of the soft sand about 20 feet away and missed the par putt.

"That stuff happens," Haas said about Schwartzel's birdies. "That's what winners do. And winners don't bogey two of their last four holes they play."

McCoy felt like as big of a winner as Schwartzel.

The 22-year-old in his final year of college grew up next to Innisbrook and made good on his first sponsor's exemption. He played next to Jordan Spieth, the world's No. 1 player, in the final round and looked like a pro on his way to finishing alone in fourth.

It was the best finish by an amateur in a PGA Tour event of top players since 17-year-old Justin Rose tied for fourth at the British Open in 1998 at Royal Birkdale. Robbie Shelton tied for third last year in the Barbasol Championship, held opposite the British Open.

McCoy would have earned $292,800 had he been a pro.

"It was even more fun than you can possibly imagine with it being my home course, being in contention on Sunday playing with the No. 1 player in the world who is an absolute gentleman all day long," McCoy said. "It was really, really special."

Spieth fell behind early, never caught up and closed with a 73 to tie for 18th, seven shots behind. He couldn't help but applaud McCoy when he finished his round.

Schwartzel and Haas finished at 7-under 277.

It was the highest score to par to win on the PGA Tour since the Spieth won the U.S. Open at 5 under.

"I think everyone's goal is to keep bogeys off the card," Schwartzel said when he finished his regulation round. "You're just surviving."

That wasn't easy to do.

Steve Stricker was two shots out of the lead until he made a double bogey on the par-5 11th and never recovered. Graham DeLaet of Canada, starting the final round one shot behind and determined to get his first PGA Tour victory, never made a birdie in his round of 75.

Ryan Moore hit the ball great and couldn't figure out the greens, which were slower than normal. Moore was within one shot of the lead at the turn, but he closed with 12 straight pars for a 71 to finish two shots out of the playoff in third place.

It also was a tough day for Ian Poulter, who had a 75-75 weekend and tied for 67th.

That bumped Poulter down to No. 67 in the world ranking, which could knock him out of the Dell Match Play. This was the final week before the world ranking is used to determine the 64-man field (Jim Furyk and Henrik Stenson are not playing). PGA Tour rookie Patton Kizzire closed with a 72 and tied for 33rd, enough to move past Poulter.

Twin wins for Tomokane, Aldan

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Aaron Tomokane made up for his surprise loss in 2015 after winning in the 2nd Marianas Muscle Bodybuilding and Physique Competition held last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center in Susupe.

Tomokane topped last weekend's men's bodybuilding contest, avenging his defeat at the hands of inaugural champion Alvin Rebong. The 2015 winner slid to second place, while Ezekiel Valdez rounded out the Top 3.

Tomokane, the crowd favorite, also won the same event in the tournament that doubled as the CNMI Bodybuilding and Physique Championships. He received trophies for topping both contests.

Vincent Aldan duplicated Tomokane's twin wins after prevailing in the men's physique. Aldan prevailed against Enrico Valdez, Alberto Roberto, and John Nekaifes.

In the women's division, there was only one entry in Jocelyn Itibus.

The Top 3 finishers in the men's bodybuilding and physique in the Marianas Muscle received trophies, while only the first placer got awards in the championships. Miss Marianas Jian Joyner and head judge Josephine Togawa presented the trophies to the winners. Greg Borja, Farleen Esmundo, Valerie De Mesa, and Andy Reese joined Togawa on the board of judges, while Commonwealth Bodybuilding Federation president John Davis hosted the competition.

Davis said last weekend's event was also a qualifier for off-island tournaments this year.

"We're looking at sending people to Tahiti this year for the South Pacific Championships and we will get representatives for that tournament from here and other qualifiers. From now on, that will be our selection process. No one can represent the CNMI to off-island contest without going through qualifiers," Davis said.

He also encouraged interested individuals to join future local tournaments, as CBF is trying hard to revive bodybuilding in the Commonwealth. He added that they are also working on a youth program that will help build a strong foundation for the sport.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Vincent Aldan, center, joins Miss Marianas Jian Joyner, left, and judge Josephine Togawa, for a photo during the trophy presentation in the 2nd Marianas Muscle Bodybuilding and Physique Competition held last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center in Susupe.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Jocelyn Itibus, center, is joined by Miss Marianas Jian Joyner, left, and judge Josephine Togawa for a photo during the trophy presentation in the 2nd Marianas Muscle Bodybuilding and Physique Competition held last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center in Susupe.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Aaron Tomokane, center, is all smiles after getting his trophy and medal during the 2nd Marianas Muscle Bodybuilding and Physique Competition held last Saturday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center in Susupe.

SENDIN

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end's race was his second fastest in XTERRA Saipan since debuting in the annual event in 2013 (3:49:22) and also second in the non-pro division behind United Kingdom's Dave Spence (3:26:07). His best time was in 2014 when he logged 3:21:18, which was the fastest among Saipan finishers and the entire non-pro field. Last year, Sendin was also the fastest Saipan finisher with his 3:27:50, which was the second best among the non-pro ranks behind Canada's Charles Fortier (3:23:21).

The 32-year-old took the top honors in his age group despite falling behind Vacchelli after the two-lap swim leg in the shallow waters off Micro Beach. Sendin posted 19:02 against the 18:57 of the Italian triathlete, but the former quickly grabbed the upper hand in the bike leg after recording 1:52:44 versus the latter's 1:56:42. Sendin went on to keep his safe lead in the final leg, as he timed in at 1:16:26 in the trail run against Vacchelli's 1:25:21.

Meanwhile, Enfeng Wang, Jacob Johnson, Ryan Snow, Furuya Toshiyuki, Rick Leone, Spence, Cole, and Alan Moore were the other top age group finishers.

Moore ruled the 65 to 69 division after clocking in at 4:33:57 with split times of 19:30, 2:22:51, and 1:51:36. He won over Masahi Ando (6:06:38) and G.I. Brown (6:32:56). Wang and Cole, on the other hand, were the only entries in the 15 to 19 and 60 to 64 divisions and registered 5:01:51 and 4:52:31, respectively.

In the 55 to 59 age group, Spence had split times of 17:58, 1:56:38, and 1:27:13 to place ahead of Yuji Ono (3:33:17 and split times of 18:03, 1:54:14, and 1:21:00) and Alex Oviedo (4:41:49 and split times of 23:09, 2:39:33, and 1:39:37).

In the 45 to 49 division, Furuya broke the four-hour barrier (3:38:04) to prevail against Roger James Sardea (3:48:48), Tyce Mister (3:54:15), Hideaki Ikegame (4:19:48), Mark Isip (4:21:01), Mark Cruz (4:34:37), and Koichi Izhizu (4:35:54).

In the 40 to 44 age group, Snow won his one-one-one showdown against Yoshinori Makino as the former clocked in at 3:35:24 against the latter's 4:37:33, while Kaisuke Hirano ruled the 35 to 29 age group, beating two others. Hirano submitted 4:00:15 to down Joel Phair (4:17:42) and Nathan Mapson (4:55:14).

There were also three competitors in the 50 to 54 age group with Leone leading the finishers with his 3:49:04. The Guam bet prevailed against Japan's Tetsuya Sugimori (3:51:59) and Saipan's Noel Altamirano (4:14:16).

BRAVES

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Last Saturday's loss was the Red Sox's third as they also bowed to the Kagman Enforcers last week.

The Enforcers also banked on their early production to set up the 7-0 victory. They scored five runs at bottom of the first and added two more in the sixth.

Gloyd Martin started out for the Enforcers on the mound and pitched four innings, allowing only one hit and one walk and striking four. Pedro Maratita relieved him and also shut down the Red Sox after recording six Ks and giving up only one hit and walking two.

On offense, the Enforcers leaned on Ignacio Mendiola's 3-for-4 performance at the plate. The starting shortstop also scored one run and two RBIs.

In other results last week, the Falcons edged the Comets in the Senior League, 6-4, while the Islanders topped the Comets, too in the Big League match, 5-3.

Jhace Palacios led the Islanders, as he went 2-for-4 at bat and got a homer in the fifth inning. Jerald Cabrera was only 1-for-3, but tallied two RBIs. Cabrera had a two-run double in the first inning where the Islanders bagged three runs. The team's two other runs came in the fourth and fifth, while the Comets were without a run in the first four innings before saving three in the fifth, but went scoreless anew in the last two.

In the Senior League, Richard Atalig blasted a two-run homer in the fifth inning to lift the Falcons to the close win. Before Aguon's home run, the Falcons and Comets were in a standoff, 4-4. The Falcons earned the four runs at the top of the third, while the Comets scored one run in the second and three in the fourth.

After giving the Falcons the lead, Atalig also pitched for the squad in the seventh and last inning, walking the leadoff batter before striking out the next three to end the match.

SAPONG

From Page 28

U.S. will be the 18-year-old sprinter's first off-island tournament of the year and Rangamar, who has been supervising her training in the past months, hopes the CNMI bet will set a new national record in the event.

"Zari has put in a lot of hard work in the past four months and I have confidence that she will do real good in Portland. Our goal is to set a personal best time and a CNMI national record. Rachel Abrams holds the record and I'm sure she's pulling for Zari to break her record," Rangamar said.

Abrams joined the same event during the 13th IAAF World Indoor Championships in Turkey in 2012 and timed in at 8.31 seconds. She shattered the 8.68 seconds Yvette Bennett posted in the similar event in Doha, Qatar in 2010.

Sapong hit the track and the weight room one last time yesterday before preparing for her departure to Portland. She trained several times in a week to get ready for the World Indoor, having morning and afternoon sessions with Rangamar.

"I start training at 5 in the morning, and/or in the afternoon depending on both my and my coach's schedule. Training sessions occur six days a week, however, due to the approaching competition dates, I have come to train five days a week," said the Marianas High School and Northern Marianas College student.

"The reduction allows my body to rejuvenate so that my muscles come to be resilient for the competition. The workouts are altered but the quality of the training is still the same. My workouts consist of weight sessions (Olympic weight lifting, auxiliary lifting, and body weights), running on hills for over speed and resistance training, plyometric training, block work that involved working on my starts, reaction time, and acceleration phases throughout the race. My coach, Elias Rangamar, who puts together my training and makes time in his schedule by also getting up for the early morning sessions, plays a huge role in my training by pushing me to surpass my personal best. Without his persistence, I would not have been able to improve as an athlete," she added.

Sapong is one of the more than 600 athletes who will see action in running, throwing, and jumping events of the biennial tournament that will return to the U.S. soil for the first time since Indianapolis hosted the inaugural meet in 1987. The competition will run from

Swim Leg of 2016 XTERRA Saipan

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Australian pro Brodie Gardner runs along the shore to head back to the waters off Micro Beach for the second and final lap of the 1.5-kilometer swim leg in last Saturday's 2016 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Angel Marie Tan is near completion of the swim leg.

Saipan Swim Club's Jinju Thompson runs out of the water.

Guam's Nathan Mapson, left, and Saipan's Kimiko McKagan run along the shore after completing the first lap of the swim leg.

Saipan Swim Club's David Boyer gets out of the water, while other swimmers catch up with him.

From left, Carina Wasle, Kaon Cho, and Mieko Carey walk at the shallow waters off Micro Beach.

Swimmers are forced to walk along the swim course because of the shallow waters off Micro Beach.

The CNMI's Tyce Mister removes his goggles as he heads to the swim-bike transition area.

Calderon's buzzer-beating 3 lifts Knicks past Lakers

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Bayern vs Juventus in Champions League; Barca confident

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Red Sox batter leans back to avoid being hit by a pitch, while the Braves catcher stands by to grab the ball during their Junior League game in the SLLB last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Braves beat Red Sox in Junior League

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Braves got off to a good start to down the Red Sox, 9-6, in their Junior League game in the 2016 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Braves collected six runs in the first three innings to lead the Red Sox and withstood the latter's comeback bid in the last four to earn the victory in the Best Sunshine International-sponsored competition.

Robin Sablan hit a two-run single at the top of the first inning to lift the Braves to a 4-0 advantage. The Braves two other runs came from Philip Kapileo's sacrifice out and Jordan Babauta's run off a Red Sox's wild pitch. Sablan then made an RBI single in the third, while Josenio Alvarez had the same feat, giving the Braves a 6-2 advantage after three complete innings.

The Red Sox were held to two runs off Dai Podziewski and Derrick Reusora's RBI single each. The Red Sox then got two earned runs and one more from a Braves wild pitch in the fourth and fifth to move closer, 5-6.

However, the Braves managed to create distance at the top of the sixth, thanks to Kapileo's two-run double and one run off a passed ball from Lavec Iguel, who pinched run for Kapileo.

After the Braves tacked on three more runs in the sixth, all the Red Sox could do was countered with one run off Orren Cruz' RBI walk at the bottom and the winning squad finished off their foes as closer Anthony Dizon got the third strikeout at the bottom of the seventh with the bases loaded. Dizon came in for Sablan late in the sixth and started the last inning with back-to-back strikeouts before getting the final out against Reusora.

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Three in a row for Sendin

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Charlie Sendin was ranked first among the Saipan finishers in last Saturday's 2016 XTERRA Saipan Championship, earning the distinction for the third straight year.

The diminutive triathlete timed in at 3:28:12 in the 1.5-kilometer swim, 30K bike, and 12K trail run to lead Saipan finishers and rule the 30 to 34 age group. He smoked the competition, as his closest pursuer in the age group—Simone Vacchelli of Italy—completed the off-road course in 3:41:00. Japan's Akitomo Konno and Saipan's Jacob Winegardner rounded out the division after submitting 3:52:22 and 4:141:14, respectively.

Sendin's time in last week-

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JON PEREZ
Charlie Sendin crosses the road to get to the American Memorial Park compound during the run leg of last Saturday's XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Sapong competes in World Indoor track tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI's Zari Nae Sapong leaves Saipan today to race in the 16th IAAF World Indoor Championships that will be held at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland later this week.

Sapong will be competing in the 60m run and will be joined in Portland by Northern Marianas Athletics official Elias Rangamar. She will run on the qualifying heat of the sprint race on March 20 at 4:40pm Saipan time (11:40 am, March 19 in Portland).

The competition in the

See SAPONG on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The CNMI's Zari Nae Sapong, left, lines up at the starting line of the 100m qualifying heat during the 2015 IAAF World Youth Championship in Cali, Colombia. Today, she will leave for Portland to race in the 60m event in the 16th IAAF World Indoor Championships.